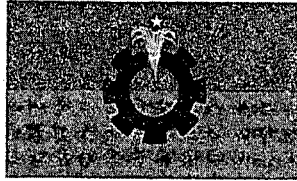


28/1, V.I.P. ROAD  
NAYA PALTAN  
DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH



SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 24 April 2019

The Honorable Eliot Engel  
Chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs  
Rayburn House Office Building, 2170  
Washington, DC 20515

**Subject: Bangladesh Election Investigation**

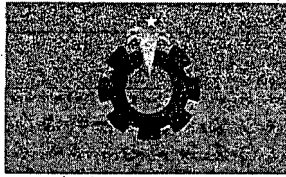
**Dear Chairman Engel,**

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In the election's aftermath, statements by the international community publicly called for an independent investigation and impartial examination—which recognizing attacks on opposition party members, voter intimidation, vote rigging and ballot stuffing, and partisan behavior by election officials in the pre-election period and on Election Day:

- The United States State Department noted “credible reports of harassment, intimidation, and violence in the pre-election period that made it difficult for many opposition candidates and their supporters to meet, hold rallies, and campaign freely...(and) that election-day irregularities prevented some people from voting, which undermined faith in the electoral process.”
- The State Department's annual Human Rights Report on Bangladesh further stated that “Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Awami League party won a third consecutive five-year term in an improbably lopsided December parliamentary election that was not considered free and fair, and was marred by reported irregularities, including ballot-box stuffing and intimidation of opposition polling agents and voters.”
- The House Committee on Foreign Affairs sent a bipartisan letter to Secretary Pompeo calling on the Trump Administration to address threats to democracy in Bangladesh, noting that “Although the government-appointed election commission has claimed the election was legitimate, we believe the allegations of widespread rigging and voter suppression must be taken seriously. According to press accounts, when polls across the country officially opened,

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SECRETARY GENERAL  
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reporters found that some ballot boxes looked suspiciously full. There are reports that Awami League activists barred some people from voting, claiming that the polling stations were closed for lunch or had run out of ballots. Some voters were even told their votes had already been cast. To make matters worse, the Government of Bangladesh failed to grant credentials and issue visas to most international election monitors, including those funded by the United States.”

- The European Union stated that “violence has marred the election day, and significant obstacles to a level playing field remained in place throughout the process and have tainted the electoral campaign and the vote. The relevant national authorities should now ensure a proper examination of allegations of irregularities and commit to full transparency in their resolution.”
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- Transparency International and Human Rights Watch chronicled substantive evidence of voter fraud and called for an independent probe into allegations of election abuses, respectively.

Despite these external pressures, the Awami League ruling party seems intent to consolidate its rule and to continue its crackdown on civil liberties and opposition voices. Because stability in Bangladesh is critical to enduring U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region, it is imperative that the United States not be seen as condoning “business as usual” with respect to the U.S.-Bangladesh bilateral relationship—and insist that international calls for an independent investigation into election irregularities be headed, and implemented, without further delay.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir  
Secretary General,  
Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP

<u>Communication Type</u>	<u>US Stakeholder Engaged</u>	<u>Date of Communication</u>	<u>Substantive Detail/Meeting Attendees</u>
Email MS Word Attachment	State Department: DRL/SCA	1/16/2019	MS Word Memo: Bangladesh Foreign Minister DC Visit
Email	State Department: DRL/SCA	1/22/2019	BNP concerns/Bangladesh Foreign Minister DC Visit
Email	NSC; State Department; Congress, USAID	4/29/2019	Newsletter update "Topline News on Bangladesh"
Email	NSC; State Department; Congress, USAID	3/18/2019	Newsletter update "Topline News on Bangladesh"
Email	NSC; State Department; Congress, USAID	1/22/2019	Newsletter update "Topline News on Bangladesh"
Email	NSC; State Department; Congress, USAID	12/27/2018	Newsletter update "Topline News on Bangladesh"
Email	NSC; State Department; Congress, USAID	12/17/2018	Newsletter update "Topline News on Bangladesh"
Email	NSC; State Department; Congress, USAID	11/26/2018	Newsletter update "Topline News on Bangladesh"
Email	NSC; State Department; Congress, USAID	11/9/2018	Newsletter update "Topline News on Bangladesh"
Email	NSC; State Department; Congress, USAID	10/25/2018	Newsletter update "Topline News on Bangladesh"
Email	NSC; State Department; Congress, USAID	10/11/2018	Newsletter update "Topline News on Bangladesh"
Daily/ongoing	State Department: DRL/SCA		Daily News Clips
	State Department: DRL/SCA	12/30/2018	Election Day assessment / Not free and not fair
	State Department: DRL/SCA	12/29/2018	Reports of ballot stuffing-stamping
			Request that US Amb issue statement calling for voting; Encouraging the people to exercise their right to vote, for the government to secure the free and fair voting process, and for the military to guarantee the safety and free access and
Email	State Department: DRL/SCA	12/29/2018	participation of the people and all candidates
Email	State Department: DRL/SCA	12/28/2018	BNP will not boycott election/Update with links 1) Letter from the chair of the UK Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs addressed to the UK Foreign Secretary; 2) Letter from BNP Secretary General addressed the UN
Email PDF Attachments	State Department: DRL/SCA	12/21/2018	Secretary General
Email	State Department: DRL/SCA	12/14/2018	HRW report link
Email	State Department: DRL/SCA	11/15/2018	EU Parliament resolution
Email PDF Attachment	State Department: DRL/SCA	11/14/2018	BNP SecGen letter to Lantos Commission
Meeting	State Department: DRL/SCA	10/22/2018	Lord Alex Carlile, MP
Email PDF Attachment	State Department: DRL/SCA	9/20/2018	BNP Vision 2030
Meeting	State Department: DRL	9/14/2018	BNP Secretary General; Tabith Awal; Humaiun Kobir
Meeting	State Department: SCA	9/14/2018	BNP Secretary General; Tabith Awal; Humaiun Kobir
Briefing/meeting	Congress: Subcommittee on Asia; Tom Lantos		
Meeting	Human Rights Commission	10/22/2018	Lord Alex Carlile, MP
Meeting	State Department: DRL/SCA	12/11/2018	Humaiun Kobir, BNP
Meeting	USAID	12/13/2018	Humaiun Kobir, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Keating staff	12/12/2018	Humaiun Kobir, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Pallone staff	12/12/2018	Humaiun Kobir, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Price	12/12/2018	Humaiun Kobir, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission staff		
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Meng staff	12/13/2018	Humaiun Kobir, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Titus staff	12/13/2018	Humaiun Kobir, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Sen. Cardin staff	12/13/2018	Humaiun Kobir, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Senate Committee on Foreign Relations staff		
Meeting	State Department: DRL	12/13/2018	Humaiun Kobir, BNP
Meeting	State Department: SCA	2/8/2019	BNP Secretary General; Humaiun Kobir
Meeting	Congress: Sen. Johnson staff	2/8/2019	BNP Secretary General; Humaiun Kobir
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Meng staff	2/7/2019	BNP Secretary General
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Price	2/7/2019	BNP Secretary General
Meetings	State Department: DRL/SCA	3/13/2019	Tabith Awal, BNP
Meetings	State Department: DRL/SCA	3/14/2019	Tabith Awal, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Sen. Merkley staff	3/13/2019	Tabith Awal, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Sen. Murphy staff	3/13/2019	Tabith Awal, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Price staff	3/14/2019	Tabith Awal, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Meng staff	3/14/2019	Tabith Awal, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Levin staff	3/14/2019	Tabith Awal, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Sen. Coons staff	3/14/2019	Tabith Awal, BNP
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Spanberger staff	4/3/2019	Former Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Houlahan staff	4/3/2019	Former Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Lowey staff	4/3/2019	Former Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury
Meeting	State Department: SCA DAS David J. Ranz	4/4/2019	Former Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury
Meeting	State Department: DRL DAS Michael Kelleher	4/4/2019	Former Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Wagner staff	4/4/2019	Former Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury
Meeting	Congress: House Committee on Appropriations staff		
Meeting	Congress: Sen. Markey staff	4/4/2019	Former Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury
Meeting	Congress: Rep. Frankel staff	4/4/2019	Former Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury
Meeting	NSC: Lisa Curtis	4/5/2019	Former Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury
Thank you notes	Congress meetings	4/9/19; 4/12/19	Former Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury
Email PDF Attachment / hand delivered	Congress: Chairman Shelby		Signed Letter from BNP Secretary General on: Foreign Assistance to Bangladesh / Congressional Appropriations

Email PDF Attachment / hand delivered

Congress: Vice Chairman Leahy

Signed Letter from BNP Secretary General on: Foreign  
4/18/2019 Assistance to Bangladesh / Congressional Appropriations

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Congress: Chairman Graham

Signed Letter from BNP Secretary General on: Foreign  
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Congress: Chairwoman Lowey

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4/24/2019 Assistance to Bangladesh / Congressional Appropriations

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Congress: Ranking Member Granger

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Congress: Ranking Member Rogers

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Congress: Chairman Risch

Signed Letter from BNP Secretary General on: Bangladesh  
4/24/2019 Election Investigation

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Congress: Ranking Member Menendez

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Congress: Chairman Engel

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Congress: Chairman Romney

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Congress: Ranking Member Murphy

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Congress: Chairman Sherman

Signed Letter from BNP Secretary General on: Bangladesh  
4/24/2019 Election Investigation

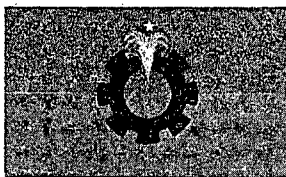
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Congress: Ranking Member Yoho

Signed Letter from BNP Secretary General on: Bangladesh  
4/24/2019 Election Investigation

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28/1, V.I.P. ROAD  
NAYA PALTAN  
DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH



SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 17 April 2019

The Honorable Lindsey Graham, USAFR (Ret)  
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State,  
Foreign Operations and Related Programs  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-127  
Washington, DC 20510

**Subject: Foreign Assistance to Bangladesh / Congressional Appropriations**

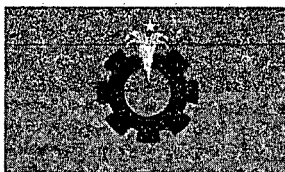
**Dear Chairman Graham,**

Thank you for the opportunity to convey concerns regarding the deterioration of democracy in Bangladesh and to urge Congressional action with respect to the U.S.-Bangladesh bilateral relationship in the context of U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy. As the current ruling Bangladesh government charts a path towards authoritarian, one-party rule, we respectfully urge Congressional Appropriators to exercise oversight capacity to review U.S. aid and foreign assistance to Bangladesh. It is imperative that Congressional Appropriators exercise this leverage carefully and in a strategic manner aimed at ensuring America's vital national security interests are secured with respect to U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy in ways that contribute to the improvement of conditions in Bangladesh, which have been steadily worsening under the current ruling authorities' draconian leadership.

Following Bangladesh's deeply flawed elections in December 2018, the deterioration of democracy in the country continues to draw the attention and ire of the United States and the international community. The U.S. Executive Branch, Armed Forces, and Congress have raised serious concerns regarding the ruling Awami League party's abuse of authority and human rights:

- The State Department's recently-released annual Human Rights Reports included a scathing 50-page entry on Bangladesh. The report notes extensive human rights violations and states that "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Awami League party won a third consecutive five-year term in an improbably lopsided December parliamentary election that was not considered free and fair, and was marred by reported irregularities, including ballot-box stuffing and intimidation of opposition polling agents and voters."
- In Senate testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, Admiral Philip S. Davidson, Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command noted that "Bangladesh's December 30 elections point to (sic) concerning trend of consolidation of power by the ruling Awami League and raise fears that PM Hasina is aiming to achieve a de facto one-party state."

28/1, V.I.P. ROAD  
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SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

- The House Committee on Foreign Affairs sent a bipartisan letter to Secretary of State Pompeo calling on the Trump Administration to address threats to democracy in Bangladesh, noting that “supporting democracy, rule of law, and human rights in the Indo-Pacific region is critical to advancing U.S. interests, and reports of widespread irregularities in Bangladesh’s recent elections seriously threaten those important interests.”

Despite these external pressures, the ruling party seems intent to consolidate its rule and continue its crackdown on civil liberties and opposition voices. Moreover, the Awami League government’s ability to address the ongoing Rohingya crisis has taken a turn for the worse, as the UN recently expressed concerns over the government’s plan to transfer refugees to an offshore island, warning that “ill-planned relocation, and relocations without the consent of the refugees concerned, have the potential to create a new crisis.”

In light of these alarming trends and their associated risks to U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy, we strongly urge you to consider opportunities to raise questions that review U.S. aid and foreign assistance to Bangladesh—during the U.S. appropriations process.

Because stability in Bangladesh is critical to enduring U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region, it is imperative that the U.S. appropriations process be leveraged as an effective means for ensuring that U.S. foreign assistance to Bangladesh does not come at the expense of democracy.

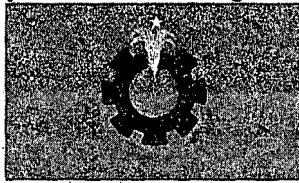
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Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir  
Secretary General,  
Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP

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NAYA PALTAN  
DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH



SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 17 April 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Capitol Building, S-128,  
Washington, DC 20510

**Subject: Foreign Assistance to Bangladesh / Congressional Appropriations**

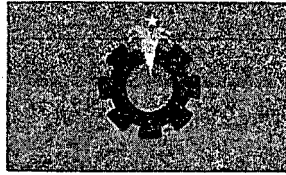
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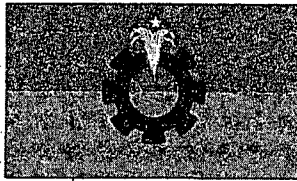
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Secretary General,  
Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP

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DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH



SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 24 April 2019

The Honorable James Risch  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-423  
Washington, DC 20510-6225

**Subject: Bangladesh Election Investigation**

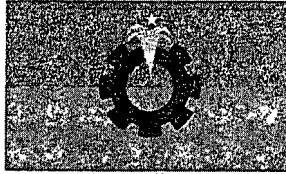
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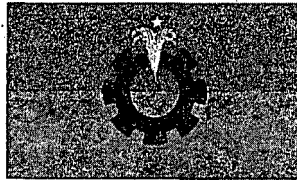
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SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 24 April 2019

The Honorable Mitt Romney  
Chairman, Senate Subcommittee On Near East, South Asia,  
Central Asia, And Counterterrorism  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-423  
Washington, DC 20510-6225

**Subject: Bangladesh Election Investigation**

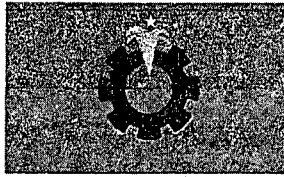
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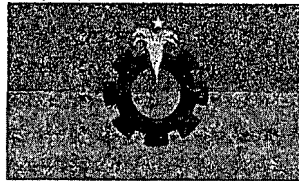
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Sincerely,

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Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir  
Secretary General,  
Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP

28/1, V.I.P. ROAD  
NAYA PALTAN  
DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH



SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 24 April 2019

The Honorable Brad Sherman  
Chairman, House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the  
Pacific, and Nonproliferation  
Rayburn House Office Building, 2170  
Washington, DC 20515

**Subject: Bangladesh Election Investigation**

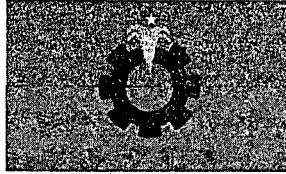
**Dear Chairman Sherman,**

Thank you for the opportunity to convey concerns regarding the importance of an independent investigation to examine widespread claims of irregularities in Bangladesh's December 30, 2018 elections—and the lack of any meaningful steps towards achieving this goal. Despite numerous calls by the international community, no such probe has taken place and no plans have been announced for an investigation. As the current ruling party in Bangladesh charts a path towards authoritarian, one-party rule, we respectfully urge Congressional leaders to raise questions to ensure that international calls for an independent investigation are heeded in the near-term. In the context of U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy, support for democracy, rule of law and human rights are critical to advancing U.S. interests, which are threatened by the continued lack of accountability for what was widely seen as a not "free and fair election."

In the election's aftermath, statements by the international community publicly called for an independent investigation and impartial examination—which recognizing attacks on opposition party members, voter intimidation, vote rigging and ballot stuffing, and partisan behavior by election officials in the pre-election period and on Election Day:

- The United States State Department noted "credible reports of harassment, intimidation, and violence in the pre-election period that made it difficult for many opposition candidates and their supporters to meet, hold rallies, and campaign freely... (and) that election-day irregularities prevented some people from voting, which undermined faith in the electoral process."
- The State Department's annual Human Rights Report on Bangladesh further stated that "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Awami League party won a third consecutive five-year term in an improbably lopsided December parliamentary election that was not considered free and fair, and was marred by reported irregularities, including ballot-box stuffing and intimidation of opposition polling agents and voters."
- The House Committee on Foreign Affairs sent a bipartisan letter to Secretary Pompeo calling on the Trump Administration to address threats to democracy in Bangladesh, noting that "Although the government-appointed election commission has claimed the election was legitimate, we believe the allegations of widespread rigging and voter suppression must be taken seriously. According to press accounts, when polls across the country officially opened,

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SECRETARY GENERAL  
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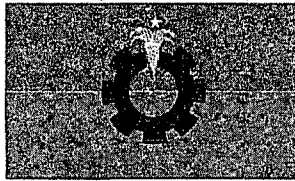
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DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH



SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 17 April 2019

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Chairwoman, House Committee on Appropriations  
Chairwoman, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
And Related Programs  
Capitol Building, H-307  
Washington, DC 20515

**Subject: Foreign Assistance to Bangladesh / Congressional Appropriations**

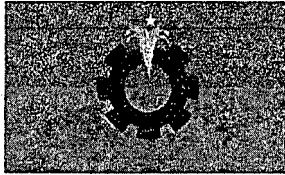
**Dear Chairwoman Lowey,**

Thank you for the opportunity to convey concerns regarding the deterioration of democracy in Bangladesh and to urge Congressional action with respect to the U.S.-Bangladesh bilateral relationship in the context of U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy. As the current ruling Bangladesh government charts a path towards authoritarian, one-party rule, we respectfully urge Congressional Appropriators to exercise oversight capacity to review U.S. aid and foreign assistance to Bangladesh. It is imperative that Congressional Appropriators exercise this leverage carefully and in a strategic manner aimed at ensuring America's vital national security interests are secured with respect to U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy in ways that contribute to the improvement of conditions in Bangladesh, which have been steadily worsening under the current ruling authorities' draconian leadership.

Following Bangladesh's deeply flawed elections in December 2018, the deterioration of democracy in the country continues to draw the attention and ire of the United States and the international community. The U.S. Executive Branch, Armed Forces, and Congress have raised serious concerns regarding the ruling Awami League party's abuse of authority and human rights:

- The State Department's recently-released annual Human Rights Reports included a scathing 50-page entry on Bangladesh. The report notes extensive human rights violations and states that "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Awami League party won a third consecutive five-year term in an improbably lopsided December parliamentary election that was not considered free and fair, and was marred by reported irregularities, including ballot-box stuffing and intimidation of opposition polling agents and voters."
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BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

- The House Committee on Foreign Affairs sent a bipartisan letter to Secretary of State Pompeo calling on the Trump Administration to address threats to democracy in Bangladesh, noting that “supporting democracy, rule of law, and human rights in the Indo-Pacific region is critical to advancing U.S. interests, and reports of widespread irregularities in Bangladesh’s recent elections seriously threaten those important interests.”

Despite these external pressures, the ruling party seems intent to consolidate its rule and continue its crackdown on civil liberties and opposition voices. Moreover, the Awami League government’s ability to address the ongoing Rohingya crisis has taken a turn for the worse, as the UN recently expressed concerns over the government’s plan to transfer refugees to an offshore island, warning that “ill-planned relocation, and relocations without the consent of the refugees concerned, have the potential to create a new crisis.”

In light of these alarming trends and their associated risks to U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy, we strongly urge you to consider opportunities to raise questions that review U.S. aid and foreign assistance to Bangladesh—during the U.S. appropriations process.

Because stability in Bangladesh is critical to enduring U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region, it is imperative that the U.S. appropriations process be leveraged as an effective means for ensuring that U.S. foreign assistance to Bangladesh does not come at the expense of democracy.

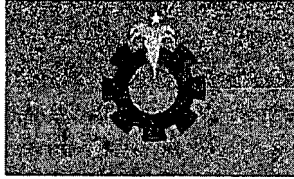
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SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 17 April 2019

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs  
Capitol Building, HT-2  
Washington, DC 20515-6021

**Subject: Foreign Assistance to Bangladesh / Congressional Appropriations**

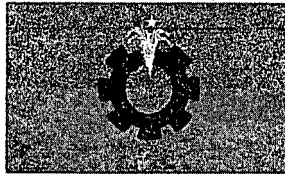
**Dear Ranking Member Rogers,**

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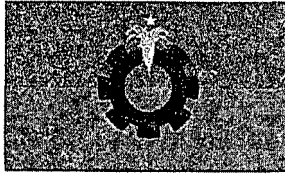
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SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 17 April 2019

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations  
Capitol Building, H-307  
Washington, DC 20515

**Subject: Foreign Assistance to Bangladesh / Congressional Appropriations**

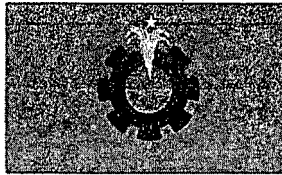
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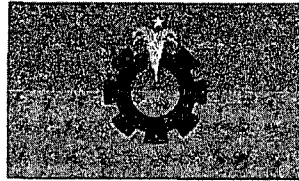
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SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 24 April 2019

The Honorable Michael McCaul  
Ranking Minority Member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs  
Rayburn House Office Building, 2170  
Washington, DC 20515

**Subject: Bangladesh Election Investigation**

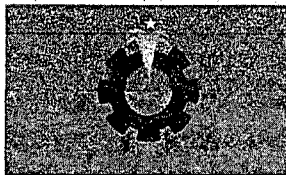
**Dear Ranking Member McCaul,**

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In the election's aftermath, statements by the international community publicly called for an independent investigation and impartial examination—which recognizing attacks on opposition party members, voter intimidation, vote rigging and ballot stuffing, and partisan behavior by election officials in the pre-election period and on Election Day:

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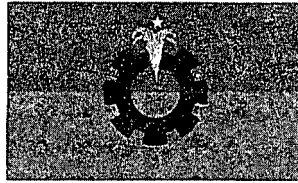
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SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 24 April 2019

The Honorable Bob Menendez  
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-423  
Washington, DC-20510-6225

**Subject: Bangladesh Election Investigation**

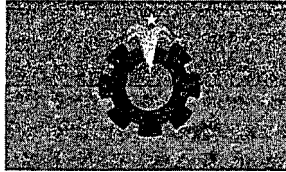
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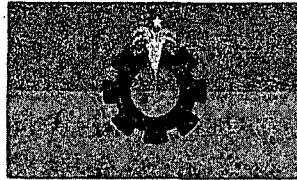
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SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 24 April 2019

The Honorable Chris Murphy  
Ranking Member, Senate Subcommittee On Near East,  
South Asia, Central Asia, And Counterterrorism  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-423  
Washington, DC 20510-6225

**Subject: Bangladesh Election Investigation**

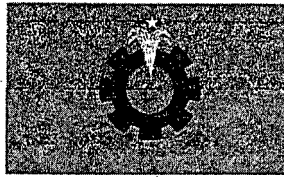
**Dear Ranking Member Murphy,**

Thank you for the opportunity to convey concerns regarding the importance of an independent investigation to examine widespread claims of irregularities in Bangladesh's December 30, 2018 elections—and the lack of any meaningful steps towards achieving this goal. Despite numerous calls by the international community, no such probe has taken place and no plans have been announced for an investigation. As the current ruling party in Bangladesh charts a path towards authoritarian, one-party rule, we respectfully urge Congressional leaders to raise questions to ensure that international calls for an independent investigation are heeded in the near-term. In the context of U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy, support for democracy, rule of law and human rights are critical to advancing U.S. interests, which are threatened by the continued lack of accountability for what was widely seen as a not "free and fair election."

In the election's aftermath, statements by the international community publicly called for an independent investigation and impartial examination—which recognizing attacks on opposition party members, voter intimidation, vote rigging and ballot stuffing, and partisan behavior by election officials in the pre-election period and on Election Day:

- The United States State Department noted "credible reports of harassment, intimidation, and violence in the pre-election period that made it difficult for many opposition candidates and their supporters to meet, hold rallies, and campaign freely...(and) that election-day irregularities prevented some people from voting, which undermined faith in the electoral process."
- The State Department's annual Human Rights Report on Bangladesh further stated that "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Awami League party won a third consecutive five-year term in an improbably lopsided December parliamentary election that was not considered free and fair, and was marred by reported irregularities, including ballot-box stuffing and intimidation of opposition polling agents and voters."
- The House Committee on Foreign Affairs sent a bipartisan letter to Secretary Pompeo calling on the Trump Administration to address threats to democracy in Bangladesh, noting that "Although the government-appointed election commission has claimed the election was legitimate, we believe the allegations of widespread rigging and voter suppression must be taken seriously. According to press accounts, when polls across the country officially opened,

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NAYA PALTAN  
DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH



SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

reporters found that some ballot boxes looked suspiciously full. There are reports that Awami League activists barred some people from voting, claiming that the polling stations were closed for lunch or had run out of ballots. Some voters were even told their votes had already been cast. To make matters worse, the Government of Bangladesh failed to grant credentials and issue visas to most international election monitors, including those funded by the United States.”

- The European Union stated that “violence has marred the election day, and significant obstacles to a level playing field remained in place throughout the process and have tainted the electoral campaign and the vote. The relevant national authorities should now ensure a proper examination of allegations of irregularities and commit to full transparency in their resolution.”
- The United Kingdom stated that it was “aware of credible accounts of obstacles, including arrests, that constrained or prevented campaigning by opposition parties...(and) urge a full, credible and transparent resolution of all complaints related to the conduct of the elections.”
- The United Nations urged the Bangladesh authorities to “carry out prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigations into all alleged acts of violence and human rights violations related to the elections with a view to holding accountable those responsible, regardless of their political affiliations.”
- Transparency International and Human Rights Watch chronicled substantive evidence of voter fraud and called for an independent probe into allegations of election abuses, respectively.

Despite these external pressures, the Awami League ruling party seems intent to consolidate its rule and to continue its crackdown on civil liberties and opposition voices. Because stability in Bangladesh is critical to enduring U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region, it is imperative that the United States not be seen as condoning “business as usual” with respect to the U.S.-Bangladesh bilateral relationship—and insist that international calls for an independent investigation into election irregularities be headed, and implemented, without further delay.

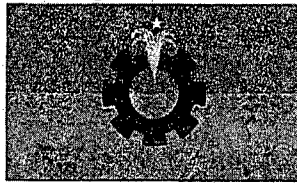
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Sincerely,

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Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir  
Secretary General,  
Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP

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NAYA PALTAN  
DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH



SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 24 April 2019

The Honorable Ted Yoho  
Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on  
Asia, the Pacific, and Nonproliferation  
Rayburn House Office Building, 2170  
Washington, DC 20515

**Subject: Bangladesh Election Investigation**

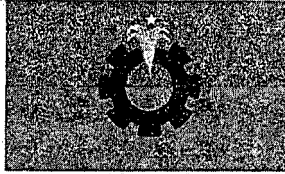
**Dear Ranking Member Yoho,**

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Despite these external pressures, the Awami League ruling party seems intent to consolidate its rule and to continue its crackdown on civil liberties and opposition voices. Because stability in Bangladesh is critical to enduring U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region, it is imperative that the United States not be seen as condoning “business as usual” with respect to the U.S.-Bangladesh bilateral relationship—and insist that international calls for an independent investigation into election irregularities be headed, and implemented, without further delay.

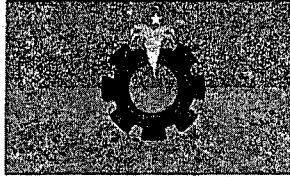
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Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir  
Secretary General,  
Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP

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DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH



SECRETARY GENERAL  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY

Date: 17 April 2019

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice-Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs  
Capitol Building, S-128,  
Washington, DC 20510

**Subject: Foreign Assistance to Bangladesh / Congressional Appropriations**

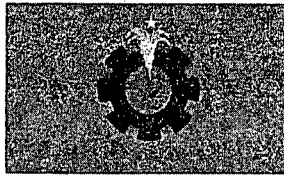
**Dear Vice-Chairman Leahy,**

Thank you for the opportunity to convey concerns regarding the deterioration of democracy in Bangladesh and to urge Congressional action with respect to the U.S.-Bangladesh bilateral relationship in the context of U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy. As the current ruling Bangladesh government charts a path towards authoritarian, one-party rule, we respectfully urge Congressional Appropriators to exercise oversight capacity to review U.S. aid and foreign assistance to Bangladesh. It is imperative that Congressional Appropriators exercise this leverage carefully and in a strategic manner aimed at ensuring America's vital national security interests are secured with respect to U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy in ways that contribute to the improvement of conditions in Bangladesh, which have been steadily worsening under the current ruling authorities' draconian leadership.

Following Bangladesh's deeply flawed elections in December 2018, the deterioration of democracy in the country continues to draw the attention and ire of the United States and the international community. The U.S. Executive Branch, Armed Forces, and Congress have raised serious concerns regarding the ruling Awami League party's abuse of authority and human rights:

- The State Department's recently-released annual Human Rights Reports included a scathing 50-page entry on Bangladesh. The report notes extensive human rights violations and states that "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Awami League party won a third consecutive five-year term in an improbably lopsided December parliamentary election that was not considered free and fair, and was marred by reported irregularities, including ballot-box stuffing and intimidation of opposition polling agents and voters."
- In Senate testimony before the Committee on Armed Services, Admiral Philip S. Davidson, Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command noted that "Bangladesh's December 30 elections point to (sic) concerning trend of consolidation of power by the ruling Awami League and raise fears that PM Hasina is aiming to achieve a de facto one-party state."

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- The House Committee on Foreign Affairs sent a bipartisan letter to Secretary of State Pompeo calling on the Trump Administration to address threats to democracy in Bangladesh, noting that “supporting democracy, rule of law, and human rights in the Indo-Pacific region is critical to advancing U.S. interests, and reports of widespread irregularities in Bangladesh’s recent elections seriously threaten those important interests.”

Despite these external pressures, the ruling party seems intent to consolidate its rule and continue its crackdown on civil liberties and opposition voices. Moreover, the Awami League government’s ability to address the ongoing Rohingya crisis has taken a turn for the worse, as the UN recently expressed concerns over the government’s plan to transfer refugees to an offshore island, warning that “ill-planned relocation, and relocations without the consent of the refugees concerned, have the potential to create a new crisis.”

In light of these alarming trends and their associated risks to U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy, we strongly urge you to consider opportunities to raise questions that review U.S. aid and foreign assistance to Bangladesh—during the U.S. appropriations process.

Because stability in Bangladesh is critical to enduring U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific region, it is imperative that the U.S. appropriations process be leveraged as an effective means for ensuring that U.S. foreign assistance to Bangladesh does not come at the expense of democracy.

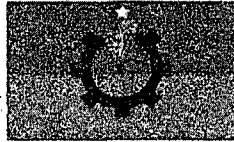
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Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir  
Secretary General,  
Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP

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BANGLADESH.



**SECRETARY GENERAL**  
BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY-BNP

December 20, 2018

Mr. Antonio Guterres,  
Secretary General of the United Nations  
Office of the Secretary General of the United Nations  
UN HQ, First Avenue NY  
New York, 10017,  
USA.

**Dear Antonio Guterres,**

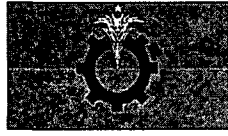
The Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP has clearly shown its aspiration to participate in the upcoming general elections in Bangladesh. This decision was based on BNP's founding belief of an inclusive democratic process as well as to protect the 'right to vote' of the citizens. To uphold the interest of the nation, the Jatiya Oikya Front (JOF) was formed based on a 7 point demand to ensure a credible and free and fair election. The JOF also had a dialogue with the Prime Minister in order to emphasize the need for a fair election through which the will of the people of Bangladesh would be respected. Unfortunately, the current regime has failed to honor their assurances.

As we approach the elections scheduled for 30 December the election process has already lost all credibility. A series of disqualifications of candidates and brutal attacks against candidates who are trying to campaign have already made this election process less than participatory. The present government has willfully failed to keep their commitments to you to ensure a free and fair election. Instead they have resorting to state sponsored violence and terrorism. The people of Bangladesh still hope to be able to express their will through the ballots in the general election, but at the same time expect the United Nations to provide the leadership to all its member states and remain committed to its own charter of upholding the values of participatory democracy and universal human rights. Against this backdrop, the current government in Bangladesh must be asked to dissolve the parliament, immediately halt all arrests and release all political prisoners and deploy the armed forces with magistracy powers in order to relieve the general voters from intimidation and fear.

I refer to my meeting with Assistant Secretary General Miroslav Jenca on 12 September, who had met me on your behalf. We had discussed in details the situation prevailing in Bangladesh and since then the situation has continued to deteriorate as we get closer to the election date. We had also stressed that a strong mandate and stability was required by the next government in Bangladesh in order to successfully resolve the crisis with the Rohingya Refugees, which the BNP had done twice before. As the BNP continues to uphold the Bangladeshi people's right to express their will through the ballot, the people also expect the United Nations would encourage member states to stay committed to the charter of the UN.

I thank you for your attention towards the people of Bangladesh and reaffirm BNP's commitment to remain firm on the foundation of democracy and human rights.

Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir  
Secretary General  
Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP



**Vision-2030**  
**Bangladesh Nationalist Party- BNP**

BismillahirRahmanir Rahim

**Vision 2030**

**Bangladesh Nationalist Party- BNP**

The people of Bangladesh nurtured a dream as they trammelled through the odds of the liberation struggle. The dream was about social justice, human dignity and equality. This dream of the people has not yet been realized. It has been shattered by the millstone of misrule and tyranny. We have to vow anew to realize the dream unitedly. Bangladesh Nationalist party aims at building a tolerant, humane, peace-loving, people's welfare oriented, social and economic justice driven democratic and prosperous society ensuring participatory role of people belonging to all faiths and ethnic nationalities, and upholding their thoughts, hopes and aspirations.

BNP firmly believes people occupies the center-stage of all national development. BNP has compiled Vision-2030 to achieve the objectives of making Bangladesh a happy, prosperous, modern and self-respecting nation through uprooting the obstacles that thwart people's genius, effort, enthusiasm and initiative.

**Democracy**

1. BNP is of the opinion that the people of Bangladesh has been dispossessed of the ownership of the state that they had created through the great liberation war. BNP wants to hand over the lost ownership of the country back to her people.
2. BNP is committed to building a liberal democratic society wherein freedom of expression and rights of citizens upholding national interest shall be protected. BNP unwaveringly pledges to respect opinion or belief of any group or individual, however small it be.
3. We do not believe in 'one day democracy'. BNP does not like people's power to confine to election-day alone. BNP wants to be true to the hopes and aspirations of the people reflected through every day public opinion.
4. BNP aims at managing the affairs of the state with due deference to the opinions of the civil society, mass-media, opinion surveys, expert opinion, essence of all sorts of knowledge gathered through experience and day to day hopes and aspirations of the people. BNP, armed with mass support, will resist the sinister move of exiling democracy by the authoritarian ruler taking recourse to the fallacious plea that development is pre-eminent over democracy.
5. Existing constitutional order vests all executive powers of the republic unilaterally in the hands of the Prime Minister. This system is completely inconsistent with the recognized form of parliamentary system. Experience of the recent time made the people of the country deeply realize that the monolithic executive authority of the Prime Minister has created an authoritarian dictatorship with a parliamentary façade. In order to bring an end to this situation, the executive powers of the republic shall be balanced through appropriate constitutional amendment.
6. As a part of the reforms of the current constitutional arrangement, it will be examined if **Upper House of the JatiyaSangsad** may be established keeping the existing unitary character and structure of the constitution intact.

7. After coming to power in 2009, Awami League brought 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> amendments to the constitution through which the system of referendum and caretaker government system during election was abrogated. Some undemocratic articles/sections were incorporated into the constitution like the system of holding JatiyaSangsad Election keeping the erstwhile parliament alive, somemore undemocratic articles/sections were incorporated into the constitution barring bringing changes, addition, substitution, abrogation, or the introduction of articles/sections in certain parts of the constitution. Additionally, the power of impeachment of the judges of higher judiciary was vested upon the JaityaSangsad. BNP shall make a review of these controversial and undemocratic articles/sections and bring in necessary reforms to the constitution.
8. BNP shall restore the provision of **Referendum** in the constitution to reinstate the democratic right of the people.
9. JatiyaSangsad will be transformed into the center-point of all national issues. The opposition parties will be shared on all issues of national interest. The chairmanship of public accounts committee and public undertakings committee shall be offered to the members of the opposition. In order to strengthen the parliamentary activities, different caucus shall be encouraged to be formed integrating the back-benchers from the opposition and treasury bench.
10. Rain-bow displays in brilliant sequence a glow of seven bright colors in the autumn sky. BNP wants to nurture a political culture involving all political shades of opinion and paths that will transform Bangladesh into a '**Rain-bow Nation**'.
11. BNP is firmly determined to reach the destination of democracy, justice and fair-play, which had been the tenets of the liberation war consecrated by the people. Hence, BNP wants to combine together 3 Gs – 'Good policy', 'Good governance' and 'Good administration'.

#### **Nation Building**

12. BNP wants to bring an end to political and social divisions in the country by uniting spirit of Bangladeshi nationalism.
13. BNP aims at building an integrated nationhood bringing together all fragments of the nation irrespective of religious, regional, ethnic and gender identities.
14. BNP wants to achieve the profound objective of building an **inclusive society** through a greater fusion of all sections of people. This will require elimination of all types of inequality and obstacles of divisiveness so that everybody's might and effort can be utilized for nation-building.
15. BNP wants to unite the nation that has fallen victim to divisiveness. Continuous dialogue, exchange of views and creation of mutual understanding shall be the instrument of BNP to strike a unified chord among all hues of ideological followings.
16. BNP wants to establish a forward-looking new stream of governance and political culture by embracing novelty as against politics of vengeance and requital. BNP will make efforts to reach a new social contract towards this goal.

#### **Good Governance**

17. To ensure democracy, good governance and economic transparency, BNP shall cleanse all constitutional and statutory bodies of the filth of vested interest and

party-philia through adopting all legal and procedural measures to enhance efficiency and restore confidence in these bodies.

18. National institutions have been turned ineffectual for serving narrow party interest. BNP will ensure effectiveness of the state administrative machinery, police and other relevant national institutions through giving due recognition to honesty, efficiency, merit, capability, patriotism and judiciousness alone, without considering loyalty to party that be.
19. BNP will give credence to training, experience, honesty, excellence in merit and creativity only, for considering eligibility in civil and military administration. BNP will make it a must to put an end to partisan and extralegal interference and see to it that judiciary, public administration, and police enjoy the freedom to lawfully discharge their duties.
20. BNP shall not make any compromise with corruption. In order to arrest spread of corruption in the society like a filthy wound, rule of law, accountability and transparency shall be thoroughly implemented along with procedural and legal reforms.
21. The office and position of the **Ombudsman** shall be created as per the constitution in order to ensure administrative accountability and transparency.
22. Bangladesh is now an unsecured and risky land. Even a child in the mother's womb is not free from the claw of cruel crimes. People seeking justice from the court is being denied justice. Courts are used to suppress the members of the opposition parties. A culture of impunity has engulfed the country. In order to redress the situation, fairness and justice should be ensured. To achieve this goal Public Administration, Judiciary, Police, and Prison have to be reformed. These institutions should be made transparent, efficient, modern, and updated.
23. BNP is totally faithful to human values and dignity. BNP is oath-bound to rule of law. Suffice it to say that no rule of black law shall be acceptable to BNP in the name of rule of law. BNP shall annul all sorts of black laws. BNP shall bring an end to all forms of inhuman physical and mental torture and extra-judicial killings to keep people free from all forms of cruel treatment.
24. 'Special Powers Act 1974' shall be repealed.
25. Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations shall be implemented.
26. It is agreed by all that there is no transparency in the appointment process of the Judges. The criteria for appointment, promotion, posting, and jurisdiction of the judges of the highest to the lowest courts will only be merit rising above partisan considerations. The judges of higher judiciary shall be appointed on the basis of strict standards of knowledge, wisdom, morality, patriotism, sense of judgment and goodwill. In order to ensure competence, merit and transparent process in the appointment of judges of the higher courts in the light of the constitution, a law shall be enacted laying down the competence and standard through a Select Committee and Supreme Judicial Council. The CV and wealth statement of the persons so selected/recommended shall be made public.
27. Fair justice and rule of law for the people shall be ensured through effective independence and neutrality of the judiciary. The lower courts will be freed from

the control of the executives and a separate secretariat under the Supreme Court will control them.

28. Administration of justice and the process of justice shall be transformed fully into electronic/online management to make them corruption free, transparent and accountable to the seekers of justice. The justice seekers will know about the open information of the courts through electronic/online system and mobile phone technology.
29. Pending cases will be freed from case-jam through appointing required number of competent judges.
30. **Jury** system in lower judiciary will be re-introduced on a pilot basis consisting of non-controversial, respectable, ethically correct, and ideal persons to make the judicial process transparent, speedy, and acceptable.
31. Village-courts shall be re-formed to transform them into effective courts with a view to reduce the load of cases on the shoulder of higher courts and to encourage local justice and alternative dispute settlement. It will be examined to see whether traditional informal arbitration courts can be introduced side by side with existing village-courts under Union Parishads.
32. A high level **Judicial Commission** shall be formed to reform existing worm-eaten justice system.
33. Police in many instances does not entertain cases at the police station. This is denial of justice. Right to even justice in the criminal cases through proper protection of law on the part of criminal justice seekers will be ensured through use of online method and mobile technology.
34. The police force will be built up congruent with the spirit of a free and democratic society. The police force will be turned into a force that reverses the public through motivation, training, and moral up-liftment through ensuring **judicial oversight** on the police in the light of CrPC, PRB, Police Act, and all other relevant Acts and Rules and thus create an accountable and welfare oriented public administration.
35. The Police Force will be turned into a skilled, state of the art and well equipped force in keeping with fast changing world and technological advancements. The law enforcing agencies will be freed from partisan influence to make them smart, skilled, neutral and welfare oriented so that they can protect life, liberty, and property of the public and establish peace and discipline and rule of law through performing duties neutrally and professionally. All sorts of undesirable political interference on the law enforcing agencies will be stopped.
36. Lower field level police staff including Police Constable / Traffic Police and ASI will not be allowed to continue in duties at a stress for more than 8 hours, or they shall not be compelled to do so. For performing risky duties, they will be given Risk Allowance and for working beyond 8 hours, they will be paid Overtime Allowance at reasonable rate per hour. Effective steps will be taken to solve the housing problem of the police personnel of the rank of ASI down to Constables.
37. Pay and allowances and other privileges of the public servants shall be increased in line with the prices of the essentials.
38. Far reaching reform program will be taken up for the police and public administration to ensure public safety. It has become a big challenge in Bangladesh

to appoint right person to the right post. Rising above personal bias, or parochial party loyalty, public administration will be reorganized on the basis of merit, honesty, efficiency, capability, patriotism, morality, and sense of judgement.

39. An efficient, transparent, dynamic, meritorious, accountable, consistent with the spirit of time and pro people public administration will be built up. Appointment process shall be reformed appropriately to ensure the value of merit. Quota system other than for sons and daughters of the Freedom Fighters, women, and marginal ethnic groups will be abolished. An appropriate Civil Service Act shall be enacted in keeping with dynamic globalization and in the light of the constitution. E-Governance shall be introduced at every stage. In order to increase the efficiency of public administration, advanced training will be arranged at home and abroad.

#### **Defense**

40. The armed forces shall be modernized, trained and organizationally reinforced and equipped with cutting edge technology, advanced armaments and imbued with supreme spirit of patriotism. Civil and military relations will be so designed to be compatible with democratic dispensation. The Armed Forces shall be appropriately developed and expanded. Participation of the defense in the national developmental activities and international peace-keeping will be encouraged.

#### **Foreign Policy**

41. BNP is firmly committed to uphold independence, sovereignty and dignity of Bangladesh. BNP will not interfere into the internal affairs of any other country neither will create any security threat to any other country. In the same vein BNP commits that strong resistance will be made if any other country interferes into internal affairs of Bangladesh and poses any threat to state security of Bangladesh. BNP believes that across the border Bangladesh have friends and no master. With respect to foreign relations, topmost priority will be given to national interest of Bangladesh. BNP will build up special relation with Muslim Ummah and the neighboring countries.

#### **Moral Rearmament**

42. There has been a tremendous erosion of ethical and moral values in Bangladesh. This has led to severe social unrest and anarchy. BNP is firmly committed to resisting this erosion of ethical and moral values through the instrument of mass media, academic curriculum, inculcation of proper religious values and positive social movement.
43. Teachers and students will be imbued with appropriate spirit to create inclusive, humane, tolerant, just and egalitarian society.

#### **Service Delivery**

44. People do not get due benefit of public services due to corruption, negligence of duty, lack of feeling for the people, social discrimination, lack of accountability, lack of public awareness, and above all due to absence of people's participation in the production and distribution of services. The quality of services provided by state and statutory bodies, including power supply, supply of drinking water, sewage services, maintenance of environmental quality, police service, judicial service, health service and administrative services shall be gradually improved through bold strides.

45. The problems of service providing systems like power supply, drinking water, sewage and conservancy, police-judicial-health- administrative services by the public and statutory bodies will be identified and solved fast.

#### **Social Safety Network**

46. Social safety network shall be expanded further for the survival of the disadvantaged and ultra-poor people irrespective of caste, creed and religion till the end of their poverty so that no poor and distressed person shall remain outside the purview of social safety network. Per capita allocation in this regard will be increased in keeping with inflation. In order to ensure food security for very low income people, Government Rationing system shall be introduced.
47. The amount of allowance for the distressed widow, women abandoned by their husbands and the helpless old will be increased in keeping with the rate of inflation. The distribution of special type of allowances will be made free of corruption and flawless.
48. A **"Pension Fund"** will be created to ameliorate the sufferings of old people who had been engaged in private sector jobs. This fund will be created out of a specific percentage of the income of such persons so that it comes for the use of reducing distress and sufferings in the old age. The contributors to this fund will be given a just rate of profit. One can contribute to this fund since the beginning till the end of one's working life. Those who will contribute to this fund will be given loan out of this fund on the basis of relevant rules and regulations. This pension fund money may be invested for economic development and infrastructure building.
49. A **mapping** of the areas affected by poverty, distress, and lack of education, health facilities and infrastructural benefits will be made through an intensive survey of the grass root areas. Short term material assistance will be given to the ultra-poor of these areas to give them an opportunity for survival. In medium and long term, sustainable employment opportunities will be created in these areas through development of education, health, and physical infrastructure so that in future they need not be dependent upon any charitable grants. The old-age people, the disabled, and those lacking earning member in the family will be uninterruptedly brought within the safety net. In every such village, people deserving the benefits of safety net will be identified through a committee of local government members and respected citizens through holding discussion in an open meeting to ensure transparency.
50. A regulation will be made enabling the disabled to travel by bus – train - launch for free.

#### **Liberation War & Freedom Fighters**

51. Though unfortunate, the freedom fighters could not be given due status during different regimes after the independence.
52. BNP shall declare every freedom fighter an **"honoured citizen of the state"**.
53. Corruption will be brought to an end in the name of making list of freedom fighters. BNP will make a correct list of freedom fighters through a transparent process.
54. The allowance given to the freedom fighters will be in consonance with inflation rate. The system of distribution of this allowance will be made corruption free and flawless.

55. Freedom fighters desirous of investment will be encouraged and will be given total cooperation. Priority will be given to efficient freedom fighters in managing Freedom Fighter Welfare Trust and business and industrial enterprises for the welfare of freedom fighters.
56. To keep the memory of freedom struggle alive, the killing fields and mass graves distributed over different spots of the country shall be identified, and memorial monuments will be constructed.
57. It is a matter of regret that the way the freedom fighters are evaluated at the state level, the martyrs of freedom struggle are not. BNP shall prepare a correct list of martyrs of freedom struggle through an intensive survey at the behest of the state and they shall be given due honour and state recognition. The allowance given to the families of martyr freedom fighters will be increased in keeping with the rate of inflation. A law shall be made to allow the freedom fighters to travel by bus, train, and launch at half the rate of fare so fixed.

#### **Terrorism, Extremism and Militancy**

58. At present, terrorism, extremism, and militancy have become a perilous problem for the nation. Democratic deficit, absence of rule of law, and violation of human rights are among the reasons for rise of terrorism, extremism and militancy in Bangladesh. All efforts for national development will fail if this problem of terrorism cannot be resolved. The nation will plunge into terrible instability. This is why BNP will take stern measures against terrorism, extremism and militancy.
59. BNP firmly believes that terrorism, extremism and militancy is a great threat to global order. BNP shall not tolerate any such activity on the soil of Bangladesh. Terrorism shall be uprooted from the soil of Bangladesh through creation of national unity and participation of people.
60. BNP shall adopt the core strategy for resisting terrorism and militancy through poverty eradication, reduction of unemployment, educating the people about anti-terror precepts of the holy religious books, and strengthening the values of peace, harmony and fraternity as against terrorism. BNP shall encourage inter-faith dialogue.

#### **Economy**

61. Economic inequality is getting exacerbated in Bangladesh over time. This state of affairs is not at all desirable in the interest of national unity and stability. BNP is committed to poor-friendly and egalitarian economic growth. BNP shall tackle the twin problem of poverty and rich-poor inequality through accelerating growth rate and through even distribution of its benefits.
62. BNP wants to transform Bangladesh by 2030 into a modern and democratic high-middle-income country. Within this period, **per capita income** shall be upgraded to **\$5000**. In order to achieve this goal BNP shall adopt creative and intelligent initiative to boost annual growth rate to a double digit figure.
63. Establishment of manufacturing industry in Bangladesh is very costly due to scarcity of land. Given this harsh reality, BNP will go for economic use of limited land resources to set up industries and will also adopt a development strategy of least-land-intensive modern service industries like bank, insurance and financial service, hotel-restaurant, IT industry, amusement industry, tourism, transportation,

telecommunication, distance-learning, air-hub, water-hub, security services, ports and shipping, tele-medicine etc.

64. The power and supervisory role of the central bank shall be upgraded to ensure discipline in the financial sector of the country. In the backdrop of share market and bank plundering, capable, honest and efficient persons shall be appointed in the Security and Exchange Commission and in the board of directors of nationalized banks to stop further corruption in these sectors. Political interference in the functioning of the financial institutions shall be put to an end. Shedding partisan and parochial considerations, the members of the board of directors and other executives of the public and private banks shall be appointed on the basis of competence, honesty and efficiency. Banking division in the Ministry of Finance shall be abolished, and the task of monitoring the nationalized banks shall vest with the Central Bank.

#### **Research & Development (R&D)**

65. Research and Development – R&D plays a very important role in any modern and developing country. Any private initiative that does not go for development of new types of products and production process cannot survive through competition. The enterprises where R&D plays a special role will be given state incentive for spending at least 3% of their annual revenue for R&D. Skilled engineers, industrial scientists and researchers are needed for R&D. Investment in the R&D sector is uncertain and risky. This is why it should be given state facilitation. BNP will prepare Annual Budgets helpful for R&D in the private sector. Encouragement will be given to build bridges among universities, research bodies, and business enterprises. For the development of R&D fundamental and applied research shall be encouraged. Measures shall be taken to patent new products and production process developed through R&D. BNP believes that the world has entered into the stage of knowledge based economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. BNP wants to move forward through this process of world development side by side.

#### **Demographic Dividend**

66. Bangladesh is passing through a demographic transition. At the moment 63.25% of Bangladesh population falls within the age bracket of 15-64. Therefore the biggest proportion of Bangladesh population falls in the group of active population. It has significance for economic development. A country where the proportion of children, juveniles and old age people is lower can accelerate the pace of economic development through utilizing the active population. However, such opportunity comes only once in a nation's life. Both the children and the old age people are dependent on the income earned by the active people. Under such a situation, higher proportion of active population contributes towards accelerated and higher economic growth. Active population includes both woman and man. South Korea could take advantage out of demographic transition and has become a developed state. On the other hand despite being wealthy, Nigeria could not take advantage of this situation, and therefore mired in poverty.
67. According to a projection of the Asian Development Bank, the size of active population of Bangladesh in 2025 will be 78 million. In 2010 it was 56.7 million. In 2010, 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the active population was minimally literate and only 4% got some form of training. Different estimations reveal that every year 2.2 million persons

enter into the job market in Bangladesh. Out of which only 1 million gets job. The rest remains unemployed.

68. To avail the opportunity of demographic dividend, employment has to be created for all active persons. This is a huge task. In order to achieve this goal, the national savings rate has to be increased to 40%. This saving has to be invested in totality. A portion of the investment will be used for required human resource development. The other portion has to be used for the fast development of agriculture, industry, and service sectors.
69. To achieve the goal of human resource development, change has to be brought in the mindset of the people. The youths of the country has to be freed from non-technical '**Diploma Disease**'. Diversity in the field of education has to be brought in consonance with taste, ability, merit, and market demand. Training program has to be introduced for professional and technical education, engineering education, medical education, science education, and different research areas of fundamental and applied scientific research, hundreds of trade and occupation (for example – plumber, fitter, electrician, electronic mechanic, health technician, nurses, master tailors, fashion designers, agricultural equipment mechanic, lathe-operator, mechanics for garments machineries and their maintenance, mechanics and engineers for industrial machineries, hospitality service, housekeeping, furniture designing, art and craft work, masonry, rod binder, land surveyor, rail workshop technicians, mechanics for vehicle, motor driving, printing technologies, and technicians for repairing mobile telephone and computers). This presupposes quality primary and secondary education. Parallely, at every stage of education and training, the quality of the teachers has to be improved. If necessary Bangladeshi scientists, engineers, and professors working abroad are to be utilized. Necessary number of institutions for trade and vocational education and certification are to be developed. To develop human resources, both the government and private sectors have to be utilized efficiently. Instructors and trainers of technical and vocational institutes have to be given special economic and other benefits, so that these institutions become effective. The banks and financial institutions have to be encouraged to spend for human resource development a larger slice of the money they use for corporate social responsibility. The main strategy during demographic transition period will be to create efficient human resources through enhancing savings and investments and to create attractive job market through investment in them. It will be necessary to create a bridge between education, research, training institutions, and business firms. Human resource has to be developed through advanced knowledge, technology, information technology, and education, and create jobs for the human resources so developed. There has to be a balance among tacit knowledge, applied knowledge, theoretical knowledge, applied and theoretical research, and such other knowledge creation activities. If we want to make Bangladesh a developed and dignified nation, there is no other alternative to achieve demographic dividend. Attaining demographic dividend is one of the priorities of BNP.
70. According to human development index–HDI 2016 of the United Nations, Bangladesh ranks 139<sup>th</sup> position among 188 countries. This indicates that Bangladesh has not yet been able to achieve high index of human development and could not take effective steps for achieving the demographic dividend. BNP shall adopt planned and effective steps for attaining **High Human Development** Index within 2030.

### **Education & Human Resource**

71. There is no alternative to education, diffusion of technology and human resource development in a resource poor and densely populated country like Bangladesh. Education shall be vocation-centered and linked with the needs of daily life. BNP wants to improve the quality of education at every level and overcome backwardness in science-education. Education is not a monopoly of the rich. BNP shall ensure quality education for all, irrespective of rich and poor. BNP shall take the opportunity for education to the door steps of the people of backward areas.
72. BNP shall eradicate illiteracy within a decade.
73. **5% of the GDP** shall be spent in the education sector.
74. Higher education in Bangladesh will be enriched through knowledge intensity, science and technology. Emphasis will be given on discipline based education, training and research. A world-class university will be established.
75. A dedicated education channel in the national TV shall be installed for extension of education and its quality development.
76. In order to connect Bangladesh with the world of merit and the international labor market emphasis will be placed upon learning Bangla, and English and other foreign languages like Korean, Chinese, Japanese, German, Arabic, French, Spanish, etc. In order to cater for language skills, training activities shall be intensified. In order to achieve this goal, more foreign language institutes will be established under government initiative and the private sector shall be encouraged to establish foreign language institutes through incentives. These institutes will be subjected to regulatory mechanism.
77. A special fund shall be created for providing scholarship to the meritorious students to enable them to achieve highest degree in their field of study from renowned foreign universities.
78. Free tuition benefits shall be provided up to degree and equivalent level for both girls and boys. Education stipend program shall be expanded for both boys and girls.
79. BNP's education policy will be life-oriented, and not degree-oriented. In Bangladesh, huge number of foreigners have been employed in business and industrial organizations due to inadequacy of specialized human resource like managers, business administrators and technical hands. They send huge remittance to their respective countries affecting Bangladesh economy. We have to create necessary skilled human resource in our own country to overcome this inadequacy. With this aim in view, BNP shall rapidly train up our unskilled labour force by introducing effective training courses and cater for their employment. This will strengthen our economy by stopping drainage of foreign currency. BNP shall take all administrative and institutional measures to create job oriented skilled human resource by arranging demand based vocational and technical training and necessary training in foreign language for the unskilled workers.
80. Social, cultural, gender and economic obstacles shall be removed to create equal opportunity for education at all levels.

81. Opportunities for special education will be ensured for the physically, mentally and emotionally impaired by ensuring appointment of trained teachers and introduction of special education system with adequate teaching-aids.
82. Election to student bodies will be ensured in all universities including Dhaka University and other higher education institutions to enable create future leaders from among the students.
83. Necessary effective measures shall be taken for quality development of primary and secondary education. The pay and allowances of the primary and secondary teachers shall be regularly increased in consonance with the prices of essentials to enhance their living standard.
84. Madrasa education will be further modernized to fit in with the day. Various professional and vocational subjects shall be included in their curriculum. This will include science and technology, IT and different languages including English alongside religious education. This will be done so that the Madrasa educated persons do not lag behind in productive activities and in case of employment, other professions and in availing opportunity to get admitted for higher education. It is to be noted that BNP during its last regime had declared 'Dawaraye Haidith' offered by Kaomi madrasas equivalent to Masters-level.

#### **Information & Communication Technology (ICT)**

85. Though the present government talks big about the ICT Sector, the real picture is not that bright. ITU Report 2016 informs us that Bangladesh ranks 145<sup>th</sup> among 175 countries in ICT sector, lagging behind Maldives, Nepal and Bhutan. BNP will give priority to ICT sector and will take effective measures to enable Bangladesh march along with the rest of the world. Human resource in ICT will be excelled.
86. ICT sector shall be transformed into the highest foreign currency earner by 2030 in keeping with the service-driven economic strategy. Outsourcing and software development shall be encouraged. All irrational obstacles on the repatriation of foreign currency earnings from ICT sector shall be removed. All global payment gateway facilities will be allowed at minimal charge.
87. Consistent policy and strategy shall be adopted for content creation and publication.
88. NTFN, ISP, and IIG shall be opened up leading to more competition, enhanced efficiency, and lowering the internet cost.
89. VOIP will be opened up. This will ease up and reduce communication cost with the rest of the world. Business using internet and the people in general will gain in efficiency and productivity. A great leap forward will be realized in exports, domestic market oriented industries, e-commerce, and ICT sector in general including outsourcing. There shall be employment creation, skill development, and a boost for government revenue. The corruption ruling roost in VOIP sector will be arrested.
90. Optimum use of ICT will be ensured in any sector that demands its use, such as administration, judiciary, education, health, commerce, communication, agriculture, and research. A specific and clear policy-package shall be adopted towards this end.
91. A national award will be introduced in recognition of extra ordinary contribution in ICT. National ICT award shall be declared for the best school, the best college, the best teacher, and the best freelancer.

92. Foreign investment in ICT sector shall be eased. To ensure foreign investment and domestic and foreign initiative in the ICT sector, appropriate institutional arrangement and different types of incentives shall be provided. In order to make maximum use of IT Innovation Fund, different creative and coordinated plan shall be implemented by 2030. Meritorious youths and interested entrepreneurs working in software industry and IT service sector shall be given all-out assistance. A consultancy organization will be built up to enable innovation capacity of the new entrepreneurs and its application. In the appropriate field, entrepreneurs who are financially insolvent will be given financial incentives at low rate of interest through expanding the startup-fund. It will be encouraged to create **Mutual Fund** and **Venture Capital** for ICT industry through the capital market.
93. Very high speed internet will be ensured in keeping with time through developing internet infrastructure so that mobile data can be transferred within shortest possible time and broadband will be provided at low cost.
94. Multiple links will be established with submarine cable to enhance capacity of bandwidth and uninterrupted internet connectivity will be ensured.
95. High speed 4G coverage will be ensured for the whole country, especially for the rural areas through the mobile companies. In correspondence with international development, 4G or higher speed internet coverage will be ensured in future.
96. Different types of incentives will be given to software and hardware industries. Domestic production of different components of internet such as smartphone, laptop, etc. will be encouraged. Zero tariff rate shall continue for all items used in ICT.
97. Modern ICT infrastructure will be built up through providing uninterrupted, stable, and quality electricity and IT Parks, both public and private, in different areas of the country including Kaliakoir. Software Technology Park, Hi tech Park, Education Park, Computer Village and IT incubator will be established to enhance opportunities for knowledge development and employment home and abroad. High capacity Data Centers will be established through public and private initiative.
98. Computer aided learning will be introduced up to HSC level. At this stage, computer programming education will also be introduced. Huge number of well trained teachers will be appointed to achieve the goal.
99. A 'Smart School' will be established in every district so that these schools serve the purpose of model **technology demonstrator**.
100. Computer training institutes for training of the computer teachers will be established in every district.
101. IT institutes will be established in different tiers under the local government. IT sector shall be encouraged by providing scholarship to the students. More developed IT education system will be established through providing adequate teachers, hardware and laboratory facilities by 2020 at the secondary level, and by 2025 at the primary level. Skill development course shall be introduced along with general education in every school and college. All educational institution and public places shall be brought within **free and safe internet Wi-Fi zone**.
102. BNP shall remove all obstacles blocking free speech, and freedom of thought of the people. Undemocratic sections of laws relating to ICT and social media (Cyber Security Act, ICT Act, etc.) shall be amended.

103. BNP shall produce an appropriate and well-timed policy to fix-up specific responsibility of electrical and electronic goods producers, importers, sellers, and buyers to protect the country from the hazards of e-waste. An appropriate collection and management system for e-waste will be developed.
104. ICT will be BNP's thrust sector.

### **Sports**

105. Planned and effective steps will be taken to put Bangladesh at an acceptable rank in the world sports map by 2030.
106. A modern technology oriented sports academy will be established in every district to achieve international standard in games and sports.
107. A modern national Olympic academy will be established in the country to ensure Bangladesh's respectable status in multi-games events like South Asian Games, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, Olympic Games, etc.
108. Public and private investment will be boost-up to employ international standard trainers, develop necessary infrastructure and sports materials for developing games and sports. Banks and private business will be further encouraged to include within their corporate social responsibility to improve the standard of games and sports.
109. A national list of promising games and sports men and women will be prepared through evaluating competence of the students of schools, colleges, and universities. Those capable of competing at the international level will be identified from among the promising games and sports men and women through training and their participation in national games and sports teams will be ensured. Besides, 'Talent Hunt Scheme' shall be introduced through social organizations, clubs, and mass-media.
110. National award will be given to sportsmen and women who will achieve success at the international level. Attractive prizes will be introduced at every administrative unit (Upazilla, Zilla, and Division) in the arena of sports and games.
111. Partisan interference in the sports arena and sports organizations will be stopped to ensure correct leadership in the field of games and sports.

### **Culture**

112. Culture is the facial reflection of a nation. Mentality and taste of a nation is expressed through culture. A culturally handicapped nation can never raise its head high among the international community. The character and nature of national culture develops through the integration of tradition and modernity. The objective of culture-practice will be inculcation of patriotism, human values, national identity, and enjoy pristine entertainment. Anything that is gracious and benign in the outer world will be integrated with national culture. BNP will resist all sorts of immoral sky-culture, and other forms of cultural aggression. Music, dance drama, plays, films and literary practice and all other components of culture consistent with national tradition will be enriched. Culture-practice reflective of bad taste and conflicting with national ethos will be discouraged. All obstacles in the way of practicing democratic culture will be removed. Democratic norms shall be perused to enable expression of free thought and ideas through culture.

113. Environment and facilities for healthy practice of culture and recreation will be created in the educational institutions.
114. The practice of giving awards in different core areas of national culture will be further expanded.

#### **Overseas Employment & Expatriate Welfare**

115. Well thought-out and planned steps will be taken to expand overseas employment and risk-free immigration to ensure good governance in this sphere.
116. In order to enhance the efficiency of Bangladeshi workers intending to go abroad in correspondence with demands of foreign labour market, necessary training institutions will be established to enable them learn foreign language and achieve necessary skill.
117. To bring down the cost of migration to a reasonable and tolerable level, the complexity of the problem will be examined and legislation of effective law, institutional regulations will be made and enhancement of the level of consciousness among the labours will be raised.
118. In order to enable expatriates to remit their hard earned income to Bangladesh through legal channel, remittance arrangement with exchange house and banks will be made providing incentive facilities.
119. Problems of the expatriates, especially those of the Bangladeshi workers working abroad and violation of their rights will be resolved in the light of bilateral agreements or MOU's.
120. To enable Bangladesh Missions play pro-expatriate, labour-welfare role will be ensured. Bangladesh mission in the countries having large number of Bangladeshi workers will be equipped with optimal level of manpower and other facilities to provide prompt and efficient consular services. The labour wing of those missions will also be strengthened to enable them provide necessary services.
121. Expatriate Bangladeshi investment will be encouraged and their opinion and suggestions will be valued appropriately for national development.
122. Prevailing harassment of the returning expatriates at the airports will be stopped. An appropriate list of returning expatriates will be prepared and different types of projects will be taken up for their welfare.
123. In response to the longstanding demand of the Bangladeshi expatriates and considering their contribution to the national economy, they will be included in the voter list and enable them cast their vote in national election to ensure their participation in running the affairs of the country.

#### **Media and the Freedom of Expression**

124. BNP always welcomes objective criticism. It is the duty of the state to ensure the professional freedom of the journalists and provide security to the constructive and objective critics. BNP will continuously try to fulfill this responsibility.
125. The controversial **Section 57 of the IT ACT** will be repealed.
126. It is necessary to formulate a set of principles consistent with free thinking and democratic spirit of print, electronic, and online media. BNP will constitute a Commission led by a former Justice of the Supreme Court, and renowned educationist, renowned citizen, IT Specialist, and experienced journalist as

members. Policy for print, electronic, and online media acceptable to all quarters will be adopted on the basis of the report of this Commission.

127. BNP shall recover the environment for honest journalism and shall ensure trial of sensational 'Shagor-Runi Murder Case' and killing of all other journalists. BNP shall withdraw all politically motivated false cases filed against the journalists.

#### **Local Government**

128. Majority of the people of the country live in the villages. BNP shall not run the country from the Secretariat in Dhaka. The country will be run on the basis of the wishes and opinion of grass-root people. Local government shall be given utmost importance in the interest of the people. Powers shall be widely decentralized. Responsibility, duty and power of the local government bodies shall be redefined and redesigned. Good governance-friendly atmosphere shall be raised to a desired level. Union Parishad, Upazilla Parishad and Zilla Parishad shall be duly strengthened so that these bodies may perform effectively in matters of development activities, maintenance of law and order and may provide services like education and health.
129. Solution will be sought wherever the problem arises, basing on the principle of 'sustainable solution is possible under local leadership'. Local government will be empowered through fixing accountability. The focal point of power and development shall be village oriented.
130. In order to ensure basic services for the people, local government institutions at every level shall be strengthened and brought to accountability as per laws and rules and regulations.
131. A portion of the national budget shall be allocated in favour of the local government in view of the inadequacy in government grants and to do away with disparity. An independent Commission created under law will distribute the amount on the basis of definite policies.
132. At present, elected representatives of the local government are being suspended/dismissed/removed arbitrarily for political reasons, which is immoral and against democratic customs. Unless convicted by the court, the elected representatives of the local government shall not be suspended/dismissed/removed by executive order.

#### **Peasants and Agriculture**

133. Keeping in view high population density and shrinking agricultural land, innovative agricultural strategy shall be adopted. **Crop zonings** shall be encouraged considering the suitability of cultivation of particular crops for the plains, hills and 'haor-baor' areas. Peasants will be enthused to cultivate HYV and high value crops. Appropriate marketing policy will be adopted to sustain farmers' effort in this direction. Canal digging and river training activities shall be strengthened to ensure irrigation and removal of water logging.
134. BNP is committed to the development agriculture and the peasantry. Due to various types of market manipulation peasants do not get fair price for their crops. An appropriate blending of price-support and input subsidy policies shall made to enable farmers get fair price for their products. Data-base will be built up in every union parishads to channelize support to the deserving farmers. A database of the

farmers deserving state support shall be created through open meeting at every union parishad.

135. Non availability of quality seeds is a serious problem for Bangladesh agriculture. In order to solve this problem **seed multiplication** farms and seed processing centers shall be set up in every upa-zilla. As the farmers would be getting benefit from this, total output will **grow up by 8% to 10%**.
136. Agricultural wages go up in the busy seasons due to shortage of agricultural labor at a specific time. Therefore, cost of agricultural production also goes up. With a view to easing labor shortage situation, incentives will be provided to produce appropriate agricultural tools. Non-farm employment will be created to absorb surplus agricultural labor in the slack season.
137. Peasants do not get fair price for their products as they do not have any control over the marketing process. Handling, sorting, storage and transport facilities will be brought under farmers' control through creation of **vertical co-operative societies** and necessary state support will be given to this end.
138. Modern agriculture is highly research dependent. Invention of new varieties of HYV seeds, salinity resistant seeds, less thirsty crops, shortening maturity period of crops, pest resistant crops, multiple cropping within one season and more than one season and input saving crops etc. will be the goal of setting up modern research stations for agriculture. A reasonable portion of the state budget will be ear-marked for agricultural research.
139. Miniscule holding size of Bangladesh agriculture has put a limit on the scope of commercialization of Bangladesh agriculture. This will further intensify in future. This problem can be overcome through technological innovations. Necessary state initiatives shall be undertaken to this end. Commercial farming subjects the farmers to vagaries of market. State shall adopt creative measures to protect the farmers from market-vagaries.
140. Agriculture is highly prone to different types of risk. In order to face this problem crop insurance, live-stock insurance, fisheries insurance and poultry insurance will be introduced, if required, with subsidy.
141. Interest on agricultural loan for poor peasants and natural disaster affected peasants will be given waiver.
142. Necessary **regulatory mechanism** shall be developed to ensure supply and manufacture of safe poultry and fish feed. Protection measures against epidemic diseases like bird-flu shall be ensured. For **recycling** of poultry feathers and excreta, soft-term credit facilities will be ensured.
143. Comprehensive research initiatives will be undertaken for the development of poultry, fisheries, live-stock, agricultural crops and forest resources.
144. In every Upazilla, veterinary doctors will be appointed and adequate supply of **veterinary** medicine shall be ensured.
145. Private sector will be given incentives for developing goat, cattle and buffalo farms.
146. Private sector will be given incentive to set up **agro-processing** industries.
147. Non-agricultural use of agricultural land will be stopped. In order to achieve this goal **clustered housing** scheme will be undertaken in the rural areas.

148. The main objective of agricultural development will be to ensure food and nutrition security. To ensure balanced and safe nutritious food (calorie, protein, vitamins, minerals, fat etc) the agriculture sector will be totally reorganized and flourished through appropriate incentives. Use of unsafe and harmful manure and pesticides shall be stopped.
149. Shahid President Ziaur Rahman took the first initiative to develop the haors and the life and livelihood of people living in the haor areas through establishment of Haor Development Board on 22nd February, 1977. We must think anew about haor-economy, the haor people, and the haor environment. Planned and multi-dimensional initiatives will be taken to encourage short-lived crops cultivation, aquatic agriculture, planned irrigation, establishment of fish sanctuary, planned duck farming, providing subsidy to the fishermen in hard days, to bring the entire haor under a planned tourism development scheme. To conserve and develop the flora and fauna of the haors, and to utilize the extensive possibilities of the haor areas in both dry and wet season, well designed measures shall be taken.

#### **Workers' Welfare**

150. BNP shall ensure the democratic right to form trade unions and collective bargaining by the working class. BNP shall introduce a review system every two years to fix minimum wage for workers of all sectors in line with essential-items inflation. It will also enact laws and by-laws to ensure reasonable labour health service in the private sector. This law and by-law will be consistent with National Health Service. The state sector shall be subjected to similar system.
151. Hundreds of workers have lost their lives due to horrendous industrial accidents during last few years. Hundreds of labourers have become disabled. BNP wants to keep the industrial sector free from such tragic accidents. Towards this end, direct survey will be conducted among the existing industrial units to identify the sources of accidents such as fire from electrical short circuits, boiler explosion, and collapse of factory buildings, etc. and necessary and effective measures will be taken to free the industrial units in the public and private sector from accidents. Special monitoring system will be at place to maintain the technical standard, such as infrastructure, machineries, and electric and gas connection, and all other related matters so that newly built industrial units do not fall into such accidents.
152. Safe housing and transportation shall be developed for workers in garments sector, especially female-workers.

#### **Urbanization & Housing**

153. A national master plan consistent with double-digit growth rate shall be formulated to discipline fast and anarchically growing urbanization. In order to implement this plan, a policy for appropriate market incentive and **regulatory mechanism** shall be adopted.
154. The challenge of urbanization shall be met by reducing growing population pressure in big cities through administrative and economic decentralization and infrastructure development at zilla and upa-zilla towns.
155. Planned residential system such as clustered housing and **vertical residence** will be built up in the villages without spoiling farm land. For planned use of land in industrialization and urbanization, a policy shall be framed and implemented.

156. Coordinated strategy shall be adopted and implemented for waste management and traffic management in the cities.
157. Right to housing is a fundamental right of every citizen. BNP shall give housing facilities at an affordable cost to low income people through a realistic and multi-purpose project. Illegally occupied land shall be retrieved and slum-dwellers and the poor homeless people will be settled over there. In this way, all slum-dwellers and poor people of the country will be given housing facilities phase by phase.

#### **Safe Food and Medicine**

158. Legal measures shall be sternly enforced to resist adulteration, specially, with regard to food and medicine. A powerful and effective Food and Drug Control Authority shall be set up. Relevant law shall be enacted towards this end.

#### **Heath Services**

159. 'Health for all' will be BNP's health policy. To make affordable health services easily accessible to all, **universal health coverage** will be introduced within the fastest possible time.
160. Health insurance will be introduced in phases.
161. **GP (General Practitioner)** system shall be introduced to ensure cost-free health services to all the citizens. One doctor will be earmarked for every citizen. This will ensure **universal health coverage** on the one hand and create employment opportunities for the doctors on the other. 50 items of essential medicines will be distributed to the poor free of cost. An effective referral system will be developed.
162. BNP will take effective measures for prevention and cure of all communicable, non-communicable and newly emerged diseases not known earlier on the basis of the principle of 'Prevention is better than Cure'.
163. 5% of GDP will be spent on the health sector. BNP's objective is to turn Bangladesh into a healthy developed nation through national health development by preventing corruption and irregularities in health sector.
164. The price of drugs will be reasonably reduced even after ensuring reasonable profit of producers, wholesalers and retailers. Domestic production of drugs, basic ingredients of drugs and medical equipment will be encouraged.
165. Developed medical facilities will be made easily accessible at the rural level through gradual expansion of developed medical facilities to the Division, District and Sub-District level. In order to make surgery facilities available at the sub-district level, special emphasis will be given on the creation of anesthetists and their posting in sub district health complex with pay incentive.
166. At least quarter of a million new doctors and proportionate number of nurses and health technicians will be required to attain high medium income country-status by 2030. To achieve this goal, realistic and standard system shall be developed.
167. All-time health services with lab facilities will be ensured at every union health center by ensuring availability of two doctors therein. Every doctor will compulsorily render services at least for two years at the union health and family welfare center. The community health centers will be further strengthened through these doctors.

168. The doctors will be appointed on the basis of merit and their higher education and training shall be arranged at home and abroad to ensure medical services in consonance with the technological development in the health sector.
169. WHO principles will be adopted for integration and development of traditional medicine in national health services.
170. National **Accreditation Council** will be formed with eminent doctors and medical educationists for development and regulation of quality health education.
171. State-sponsored health services will be ensured for prevention of infectious disease, development of mother health and maternity health. Reduction of child mortality rate and child malnutrition will be taken special care of.
172. Healthy and safe drinking water and hygienic sewage will be ensured.
173. Special health care for the old people including mentally retarded and physically handicapped shall be provided. Mobile medical unit shall work for ensuring health services to the people living in coastal belt and char areas. **HOSPICE-CARE** will be established to mitigate prolonged sufferings of the patients afflicted with critical diseases.
174. Incentive in the form of low-interest loan will be given to private entrepreneurs to encourage establishment of developed hospitals at district and sub-district levels.
175. Monitoring system comprising of health and medical specialists and eminent citizens from cross-section of people shall be put in place for ensuring quality services at Government and private hospitals.
176. BNP will take effective measures to gradually reduce population increment rate to zero percent. Family welfare programs shall be effectively expanded to all tiers of the society including slums, low-income groups and the people deprived of literacy.

#### **Youth, Women and Children**

177. Appropriate development strategy will be adopted to cater to the needs of development of life and livelihood of the youth, women and children. Participation of the youth, women and children will be ensured in national development.
178. BNP firmly affirms the contribution of women in the development of civilization and culture. To make bright the future of the country, BNP shall integrate women directly in every activity. All obstacles in implementation of this process will be removed.
179. Stern and effective legal measures will be adopted against oppression of women, dowry system, acid throwing, sexual harassment, rape and trafficking in women and children. Realistic steps will be taken to stop child labour.
180. **Day Care Centers** will be established in the public and private sectors so that women can concentrate on their duties without worrying, leaving their children in these centers.
181. Necessary measures will be taken to remove all social and cultural obstacles in the way of women entrepreneur development. In order to give more encouragement to the women entrepreneurs, they will be helped in preparing project proposal and will be given bank loan at low interest and tax holiday.

182. BNP shall make the youths efficient and capable to enable unemployed youths in productive activities through new job creation within the country and employment abroad.
183. To encourage youth entrepreneurs to make increased investment, they will be helped through preparation of project proposal, bank loan at low interest, and tax holiday.
184. Unemployed educated youths will be given '**Unemployment Allowance**' till an educated youth gets employed, or waits up to one year to avail a job, whichever occurs earlier.

#### **Climate Change**

185. Climate change is posing a serious threat to the existence of humanity. But, countries like Bangladesh is not responsible for this situation. The industrialized countries will have to bear the liability for this. The industrialized countries will have to come forward to redress the damage due to climate change. Bangladesh will take an active initiative to create world opinion to build international cooperation frame-work and adopt practical measure, to overcome the hazards created by climate change.
186. People's level of consciousness about climate change will be enhanced. To face the hazards of climate change, sustainable **mitigation** and **adaptation** strategies shall be adopted, such as reducing carbon emission, restoring canals, 'beels', rivers, drains, wetland, and planned urbanization. Intensive afforestation measures will be taken up throughout the whole country including the coastal areas. Appropriate measures will be taken to protect the forest and bio-diversity everywhere in the country including the Sundarbans.

#### **Water Resources, Blue Economy, and Environmental Protection**

187. In order to ensure optimal use of water resources throughout the country without creating any social and environmental hazards, a well-developed plan for water resource management will be adopted. A **national water grid** will be created. In order to ensure sustainable development, effective measures shall be taken to protect environment and conserve natural resources.
188. To solve the problem of water scarcity during the dry season, the **canal digging program initiated by Shahid Zia** will be initiated again to resuscitate silted canals and rivers and derelict ponds and tanks.
189. Water of rivers, canals, and water bodies has become toxic due to lack of mass consciousness. To stop spilling of agricultural chemicals, industrial waste into water bodies, stringent regulatory laws shall be enforced and mass consciousness will be raised.
190. In order to ensure availability of drinking water sourced from surface water, and purify them, highest measures shall be adopted.
191. The ratio between underground and surface water in Bangladesh at the moment is 70:30. Technological measures shall be taken on the basis of scientific research to enhance surface water.
192. Conservation of water of rivers, haors, and water bodies shall be achieved on the basis of a coordinated policy. Necessary steps will be taken for river training. Land

reclamation shall be done through conserving alluvium soils brought in by the rivers. Effective economic management of river borne sands shall be ensured.

193. There are more than 400 rivers in Bangladesh. Of them, 230 are moribund. The moribund rivers shall be made navigable through digging and during dry season these will be turned into water reservoirs. Old Brahmaputra, Dhaleshwari, Gorai, Madhumati, Korotoa, etc. rivers will be dug to make water reservoirs.
194. To ensure **conservation** of deltaic Bangladesh in a natural form and **expand the coast-line** and land reclamation, it is necessary to maintain the natural flow of rivers. BNP shall take initiative, if necessary, to build up international cooperation towards this end. The islands that have risen up in the coastal areas will be properly conserved and developed. Appropriate research, development and planned initiative will be taken up to achieve land reclamation and land expansion. To stop river bank erosion, appropriate river training, research and development initiatives will be taken up and erosion resistant structures will be constructed. Measures will be taken to construct coastal polders and reconstruction and rehabilitation measures will be made effective.
195. In Bangladesh we have displaced water and therefore water has occupied our land creating floods and water logging. Effective techniques will be adopted to remove water logging.
196. Flood protection measures will be taken up in haors, hilly land, and other flood-prone areas.
197. Dhaka has become the second worst unlivable city in the world. In the interest of life and living of the inhabitants of Dhaka, wetlands consisting of Buriganga, Balu, and Turag around Dhaka will be made pollution free, and measures shall be taken to bring back normal water flow. In order to reduce environmental pollution in Dhaka, technological and regulatory measures will be taken up. This will make the surface water clean and river navigation shall become possible at low cost. Primate cities like Dhaka and Chittagong and all other divisional and district towns shall have modern and environmentally sound waste management system.
198. BNP shall take initiatives for dialogues in the spirit of regional and mutual cooperation for sharing of water of international rivers according to International River Law. If necessary tough international diplomatic initiatives will also be taken.
199. In order to determine the stock of sea resources and flora and fauna in the Bay of Bengal(**blue economy**), regular scientific survey will be conducted. The data collected through the survey will be used for **sustainable** harvesting, use and marketing of the sea resources and **flora and fauna** of the sea.

#### **Power & Energy**

200. To meet the requirements of desired double-digit growth rate (considering approximate demand for thirty five thousand megawatt of power by 2030), BNP will take initiatives to generate optimal amount of electricity. All types of energy sources available within the country shall be exploited to achieve the desired goal. A regional cooperation framework shall be developed as needed.
201. In order to end prevailing power and energy deficit and ensure long term energy security, a well- coordinated national energy policy will be adopted and short, medium, and long term plans shall be taken up for its implementation. **Least-cost generation plan** shall be adopted. Correct and balanced energy- mix shall be

ensured. Energy source will be diversified. Use of energy efficient electricity will be ensured and quality electricity shall be provided at cheaper and reasonable cost. Energy- auditing system will be introduced for the households, mills and factories and for power and energy users at Government and private sectors. Incentives shall be given for use of energy-efficient equipment, machineries and vehicles.

202. Steps will be taken for modernization and rehabilitation of old and inefficient power plants on emergency basis. Dependence on domestic gas and furnace-oil shall be gradually reduced. Small, medium and large scale environment-friendly power plants shall be established in order to put permanent end to electricity crisis. In future more emphasis will be gradually given on renewable energy as dependable source for power generation. For reducing carbon emission various measures will be taken including generation of power from renewable energy, especially, solar energy, wind-power, geo-thermal, ocean waves, bio-gas and wastes. Transmission and distribution system shall be developed in line with power generation.
203. Fuel price in the domestic market shall be determined in consonance with fuel price in the world market. Energy source will be diversified to generate power at economic price. A new 5 million ton capacity crude oil refinery shall be set up at a suitable place.
204. Effective measures shall be taken for survey and tapping of new gas field and different mineral resources including oil at different places of the country and the Bay of Bengal. To ensure national energy security initiative will be taken to connect Bangladesh with the Gulf countries, Iran and Middle-east countries and Pakistan and India through inter - country gas line.
205. Initiatives shall be taken for least cost hydro- electricity generation, development of inter-country distribution system and regional energy security through development of regional water management and expansion of regional cooperation.
206. Filthy corruption has taken place in the name of in-transparent Quick-Rental power plants where immoral indemnity has been given to cover up corruption. This propelled repeated increase of electricity price causing untold suffering to the people. BNP will establish transparency in procurement and sale process in the power and energy sector. Electricity and Energy Rapid Supply Increase Act 2010 will be amended after due examination.
207. Supply of energy like electricity, LNG, LPG etc. to mass people and mills and industries at reasonable price shall be ensured through balanced equilibrium of imported and domestically produced energy.
208. Regular geological survey shall be conducted to discover **depletable resource** like gas, oil etc. in the sea. Dependable policy and strategy shall be adopted for lifting, use and marketing of the resource so tapped.
209. In energy generation safe and secure use of nuclear Power shall be ensured. The issue of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant will be re examined.

### Industry

210. BNP shall formulate an industrial sector friendly policy to attract domestic and foreign investment. Countrywide integrated industry infrastructure shall be developed on the basis of three basic variables popularly called 3 I's – Incentive, infrastructure, institution. The Board of Investment and all other related institutions

shall be strengthened and their efficiency enhanced through adopting rational policy and strategy. Initiatives will be taken to bring to Bangladesh overseas industrial units that are being relocated after proper scrutiny.

211. A strategy of building less land intensive industries, especially service industries will be adopted considering land scarcity in Bangladesh.
212. The success that have been achieved in the RMG sector will be maintained and further expanded and initiative will be taken to diversify the industrial sector, and Bangladesh shall be turned into a land of sustainable industrially developed country.
213. The process of establishing industrial parks and special economic zone in different important spots of the country will be accelerated. The private sector will be given assistance for setting up all types of promising industrial units. Small, medium, and labour intensive industries will be given special support.
214. Export-oriented industries will be established, while industries for local market capable of competing with foreign products will also be setup; and private initiative will be given incentives for this purpose.
215. Heavy industries will be setup along with small and medium industries.
216. Initiatives shall be taken to establish **Precision industries**.
217. Small and medium enterprises will be given all out support. Venture capital shall be made available at easier terms. The scope of **start-up fund** for medium enterprises will be expanded. They will be given technical advice, interest at lower rate, and various other incentives.

#### **Communication (Road, Rail and Waterways)**

218. Rail and water ways will be given priority in order to develop communication infrastructure of the country. A multimodal communication system will be developed throughout the country by reconstructing and rejuvenating rail, road and water transport system.
219. A deep sea port will be built in the Bay of Bengal in the vicinity of Chittagong coastal area and it will be turned into a regional hub. The deep sea port will be connected with the capital city Dhaka and the neighboring countries through a super-highway.
220. The efficiency of Chittagong and Mongla port will be increased and they will be modernized to make regional and international trade and connectivity easier.
221. Once Bangladesh had 24000 kilometers of navigable waterways. But by now either because of silting or drying the waterways have come down to only 3600 kilometers. This is a horrible picture of riverine Bangladesh. A mega project will be taken up to recover selected waterways and their multi-purpose use through dredging of rivers. The multi-purpose use of these rivers will be serving as a source of surface water, fisheries, boosting the flow of surface water, and recharging underground water.
222. Underground tunnels will be built under Karnaphully, Buriganga, Gomoti, Padma, Jamuna and Meghna rivers.
223. To ensure safety of passengers and transportation on waterways, safe ships will be increased in the private sector and landing stations will also be increased on the

bank of Buriganga and other rivers. Faster moving passenger ships will be introduced in Dhaka-Chandpur and Dhaka-Barisal routes.

224. Necessary shipping infrastructure including pontoons will be set up in small ports and ghats spreading over different remote areas of Bangladesh.
225. Like Pangaon, container terminal built during last BNP government, necessary number of container terminals will be built at different industrial belts of the country including Dhaka, Gazipur, and Narayanganj.
226. To make communication and transport safe and comfortable between islands and the coastal areas, necessary infrastructure will be built up and necessary number of coastal ships will be introduced.
227. The whole country shall be brought under rail network through building Dhaka-Laksam cord line, Chittagong-Cox's Bazar and Dhaka-Barisal railway line. Fast trains shall be introduced among Dhaka and other divisional cities. Thus all the districts of the country will be brought under rail network in phases.
228. Bangladesh will be connected with Asian Highway. Initiatives will be taken to establish regional road connectivity and rail connection between Dhaka and Kunming.
229. To solve traffic jam problem of the cities including Dhaka and Chittagong, traffic system shall be revamped.
230. For further development of road transportation, second Jamuna Bridge, second Padma Bridge at Paturia-Daulotdia points and Brahmaputra Bridge shall be constructed. More bridges shall be constructed over the rivers Buriganga, Meghna, Gomoti, and Karnaphully. Necessary bridges will be constructed over small and big rivers.
231. Dhaka-Chittagong express highway will be constructed to facilitate fast movement between Dhaka and Chittagong. Highways throughout the country will be developed into four lanes in phases. Road network such as national highways, regional highways, Upazilla connecting roads, and local roads will be developed appropriately and their maintenance will be ensured.
232. Initiatives for establishing road and rail communication network with SAARC and ASEAN countries will be taken. Initiative will also be taken to be connected with 'One Belt One Road' initiative of People's China.

#### **Tourism**

233. Bangladesh, 'the queen of all countries', has not yet become attractive for the tourists. Tourism policy shall be updated to achieve the goal of popularization of tourist industry, its expansion and development and make Bangladesh a tourist friendly destination. The entry points into Bangladesh will be made cleaner, hassle free, and service oriented. All measures will be taken to make attractive the facial view of Bangladesh by cleaning the big cities. Creative strategies shall be adopted to expand the tourist industry in a densely populated and land scarce country like Bangladesh.
234. The main capital of tourism industry is nature and culture. Through conserving these assets a sustainable development of tourism especially eco-tourism shall be adopted. It is possible to attract tourist by planned development of Bangladeshi villages through developing model facilities. Age old cultural themes prevailing in

the villages such as Jari Song, Sari Song, Gombhira, Jatra and Pala, village sports and games like LathiKhela (Stick Fight), Village Drums Beating, Art and Craft, the greenery of the villages, rivers and canals, journey by boat, and boat race etc. can be attractive to the domestic and foreign tourist. Village-tourism shall be developed at least in one village in every district with facilities for overnight stay. Other attractive elements of village-tourism will be village Pithas, plucking fresh fruits from the fruit trees. Along with public, private initiatives will be encouraged in this regard.

235. Historic and archeological sites of Bangladesh shall be developed as attractive spots for the tourists. Other than those spots places like Cox's Bazar, Kuakata, Rangamati, Khagrachori, Bandarban, Sundarban, Sylhet, Garo Hills, and few other coastal and river bank sites will be developed as special tourist spots.
236. Ethnic tourism and water tourism will be developed in different relevant spots of the country.
237. Tourism friendly laws shall be enacted for the coordinated and planned development of tourism. Travelling procedures for the foreign tourists will be made simpler and easier. Safe and comfortable travel and housing facilities will be ensured for foreign and local tourists. Trained interpreters and tourist guides shall be ensured to help and assist foreign tourists.
238. Tourism shall be created as an employment generating and poverty ameliorating sector through local and foreign investment. Modern tourist facilities and infrastructure shall be ensured in the tourist spots of the country. Small and medium investors in the tourism sector shall be given low cost credit and tax holiday so that interested entrepreneurs can avail the opportunity of self-employment and local youths get jobs.
239. In order to make old Dhaka city attractive to the tourists, different historical sites and old buildings and structures shall be conserved and refurbished. Traditional food and drinks of old Dhaka will be presented before the tourists in a hygienic and aesthetic manner.
240. As a recognition of contribution to the development of tourism industry, tourism award will be introduced in the private and public sector.
241. Bangladesh embassies/high commission abroad shall take initiatives and ensure necessary publicity to encourage over-seas tourist to visit Bangladesh.

#### **Conservation of Resources**

242. Capital and material assets that we build up and renewable natural resources that are used up are hardly maintained and replenished in Bangladesh. This culture of non-conservation erodes our economy and reduces resource flows for the use of future generation. This lack of conservation of resources also tells upon the benefit stream and longevity of development projects. BNP shall make indefatigable efforts to rejuvenate forests, store up water available in the monsoon for use in the dry season through excavating canals, water reservoirs, recycling of water and maintaining water quality. Too much mining of ground water will be gradually substituted by making surface water available.

243. A detailed and intensive survey of our sea resources (blue economy) will be undertaken and ensure their prudent exploitation and use. Sea resources shall be protected from plunder by hostile powers.
244. In Bangladesh there are many spots of scenic beauty. These spots have been subjected to **demographic** invasion over the years. The government shall identify these spots and develop them for enjoyment by the tourists.
245. Rivers that have been polluted and captured through human intervention and human greed shall be restored to their original state. Revitalization of polluted and occupied rivers will go a long way towards development of aquatic resources, irrigation and river transportation. Char areas of the country will be developed as pastures and grazing land for bovine animals to increase the abundance of milk and meat.
246. Frequent digging of roads and breaking road dividers cause immense sufferings to the people and destroy assets. BNP wants to adopt far reaching and coordinated planning to come out of this culture.

#### **Social Pathological Problem**

247. To save the adolescent and the youth from the curse of drugs, extensive awareness program shall be launched. Law preventing imports, production and illegal entry of drugs in Bangladesh will be strictly enforced. The factors which are responsible for smuggling of drugs from across the borders shall be identified and dealt with. Drug addicts derailed by frustration and other psychic conditions shall be provided psychological support for their rehabilitation. The number of clinical psychologists, psychic disorder specialists and psycho-therapists is very limited in Bangladesh. Universities and medical colleges will be given necessary support and assistance to raise the number of persons dealing with psychic disorders.

#### **Earthquake Disaster**

248. Bangladesh has done well in disaster management like floods, cyclones and tidal-surge; but many things more are yet to be done in these areas. A new type of disaster that looms large on the horizon is earthquake. Bangladesh has experienced moderate to nearly dangerous tremors in the recent years. It is apprehended that a severe earthquake may cause serious havocs to living souls and structures.

Preparedness for facing earth-quake disaster is almost absent. BNP considers earthquake as a serious threat to living being/animals and development. In order to face earthquake disaster large volunteer-corps shall be raised to assist the relevant government agencies. Modern and heavy equipment's for rescue operations shall be procured, and post-earthquake relief and rehabilitation including providing curative and life-saving health services shall be put in place. An initiative for planned and comprehensive earthquake disaster management will be set in earnest.

#### **Chittagong Hill Tracts & Backward Areas**

249. Life, property, prestige, and status of the small ethnic groups of hill and plain lands will be well protected.
250. Backward ethnic groups living in hills and plain lands will be given all sorts of advantages to avail jobs and education. Development activities of Chittagong Hill Tracts shall be further strengthened.

251. Language, literature, and cultural uniqueness of the small ethnic groups of hill and plain lands will be protected and initiatives shall be taken for their even development. A separate Directorate for the development of ethnic groups will be established.
252. Discrimination made towards the tea plantation workers and violation of their human rights will be effectively brought to an end.
253. Special programs will be taken up to uplift the standard of living of the backward people living at slums and alluvial formations (Char), haors and baors and penury-stricken areas.

#### **Communal Harmony**

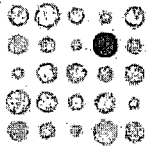
254. Social, political, economic and religious rights and right to life, liberty and property of all small and big nationalities provided in the constitution will be fully protected and secured irrespective of cast and creed and party following and opinion.
255. Followers of every religion shall enjoy full rights to practice their religious beliefs and rituals. No one will be allowed to hurt any citizen's religious belief.
256. Any attempt to destroy communal harmony will be sternly dealt with.

Realization of our Vision is difficult but not impossible. We had liberated our country through great liberation struggle. It's our solemn duty to transform our country into a developed and dignified nation. We hope we shall be getting sincere support of the development partners and active support of our people.

We strongly believe that the entire people of our country irrespective of cast and opinion shall extend their all-out support to realize this Vision in recognition of the great contribution of the founder of BNP, proclaimer of our great independence Shahid President Ziaur Rahman in achieving our independence, restoration of democracy and economic development, and our uncompromising and relentless struggle.

May the all-merciful Allah help us in realizing this Vision for the over-all well-being of our country and her people.

The End



**BlueStar  
Strategies**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: Thomas Vajda, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of  
South and Central Asian Affairs;  
Michael Kelleher, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of  
Democracy, Human Rights and Labor  
U.S. Department of State**

**FROM: Blue Star Strategies / BNP**

**DATE: January 16, 2019**

**RE: Bangladesh Foreign Minister Washington, DC Visit**

*This material is distributed by Blue Star Strategies on behalf of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party.  
Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.*

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Thank you for this opportunity to re-engage with your offices following the recent December 30, 2018 elections in Bangladesh. We very much appreciate our ongoing engagement and interaction with your respective teams, including in the months leading up to the elections.

With the visit next week to Washington by the Bangladesh foreign minister, we wish to communicate our utmost hope that the U.S. Government will take this timely opportunity to register its dissatisfaction with the compromised election—and to hold the foreign minister accountable—as it relates to extensive reports of election interference and violations.

As you know, following the election, international media and NGO observers have reported numerous findings of vote-rigging and human rights abuses. Human Rights Watch's post-election report called for an independent probe into election abuses; The New York Times editorial board called the election a "farcical vote"; Transparency International found "irregularities" in 47 of 50 constituencies it surveyed that were marred by ballot stuffing, voter intimidation, and the occupation of polling booths.

In this light, we strongly urge the U.S. Government to register its dissatisfaction over the conduct of the election with the foreign minister and to hold the minister accountable for the independent investigation of election-day irregularities.

**From:** [Jeremiah Baronberg](#)  
**To:** [Jeremiah Baronberg](#)  
**Subject:** Topline News on Bangladesh / April 29, 2019  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2019 2:53:23 PM  
**Attachments:** [image004.png](#)

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### **Topline News on Bangladesh / April 29, 2019**

Since Bangladesh's deeply flawed election in December 2018, the ruling government has deepened its path towards authoritarian, one-party rule. Yet international calls for an independent election investigation and the release of the opposition party's leader from prison have gone unheeded.

In this fraught environment, the international community continues to criticize Bangladesh for its abysmal human rights practices, highlighted by the U.S. State Department's [report](#), which the ruling Awami League party promptly [rejected](#) out of hand. [A new report](#) by the International Federation for Human Rights details "a growing and pervasive climate of fear" in which "Bangladesh's government has used enforced disappearances to silence members of the political opposition and dissenting voices."

As you continue to follow these issues, please see the below updates on the dire circumstances people in Bangladesh face:

#### **New reports highlight enforced disappearances as "part of an ongoing strategy of State-sponsored violence to suppress political opposition and dissent in the country" and other worrisome abductions—implicating senior government officials.**

- [Bangladesh: Enforced disappearances amount to crimes against humanity, International Federation for Human Rights](#)
- [Exclusive: Bangladesh top security adviser accused of abductions, Al Jazeera](#)
  - [Bangladesh blocks access to Al Jazeera news website, Al Jazeera](#)

#### **Concerns for the plight of women and girls in Bangladesh were renewed following a young woman's brutal murder—where "sexual harassment and violence are often unreported, victims are intimidated and the legal process is often lengthy."**

- [Bangladesh Protesters Demand Justice for Girl Burned to Death After Refusing to Drop Sexual Harassment Charges, AP](#)
- [Bangladesh: Ensure Justice for Murdered Student, Human Rights Watch](#)

#### **The government continues its brutal crackdown on free speech—where Bangladesh recently dropped to 150th out of 180 countries in a 2019 annual press freedom index, the lowest ranking it has ever received.**

- [Despite Denials, Bangladesh Stifles Free Expression, Human Rights Watch](#)
  - [Bangladesh: Tougher politics, more press freedom violations, Reporters Sans Frontières](#)
  - [RSF decries brazen censorship of Bangladeshi news websites, Reporters Sans Frontières](#)

- Shahidul Alam: Bangladesh is 'an autocracy by any means', Al Jazeera
- Despite Prison and Torture, Shahidul Alam Refuses to Stay Quiet, The New York Times

*This material is distributed by Blue Star Strategies on behalf of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.*

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**From:** [Jeremiah Baronberg](#)  
**To:** [Jeremiah Baronberg](#)  
**Subject:** Topline News on Bangladesh / December 17, 2018  
**Date:** Monday, December 17, 2018 2:53:28 PM  
**Attachments:** [image004.png](#)

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### **Topline News on Bangladesh / December 17, 2018**

With elections in Bangladesh less than two weeks away, the nation continues to face deteriorating democratic conditions as the people head to the polls on December 30. Opposition leaders face violent attacks and are barred from running for office, social media posts land dissidents in jail, and news sites are arbitrarily blocked without notice by the current regime.

Leaders in the international community are now taking steps to bring attention to the situation, but more influence and direct intervention is needed. As you continue to follow these issues, please see the below updates on the dire circumstances the people of Bangladesh face.

Earlier this month, the U.S. finally agreed to fund poll observers; just last week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bipartisan resolution reaffirming U.S. commitment to supporting free and fair elections in Bangladesh and calling for more active engagement. In addition, Rep. Joe Wilson sent a letter to Secretary of State Pompeo regarding the U.S.'s role in the process of supporting Bangladesh's democratic process and ensuring a level political playing field.

- [Reaffirming the commitment of the United States to promote free, fair, transparent and credible elections in Bangladesh, U.S. Congress](#)
- [U.S. to send observers to Bangladesh election amid opposition concerns, Reuters](#)

Human Rights Watch released a report on Thursday, Dec. 13, on the current government's systemic and politically-motivated crackdown on freedom of speech and its use of violent security forces to maintain power. "Governments concerned for Bangladesh's future should denounce abuses leading up to the elections, which will deny voters their rights," [Brad] Adams, HRW's Asia director, said.

- [Bangladesh: Crackdown as Elections Loom, Human Rights Watch](#)

In Dhaka, new U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R. Miller has begun a dialogue with government officials to urge for safeguards for free and fair elections. However, despite meetings last week discussing an end to the recent violence, days later, opposition Unity Front leaders were attacked and citizens continue to be injured or killed in violence on the campaign trail.

- [Veteran Bangladeshi opposition leader attacked as poll tensions surge, NYT/Reuters](#)
- [Bangladesh: Two killed in pre-election clashes, Al Jazeera](#)

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*information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.*

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**From:** Jeremiah Baronberg  
**To:** Jeremiah Baronberg  
**Subject:** Topline News on Bangladesh / December 27, 2018  
**Date:** Saturday, December 29, 2018 12:42:31 PM  
**Attachments:** [pastedImage.png](#)  
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### **Topline News on Bangladesh / December 27, 2018**

With just days remaining until Bangladeshis head to the polls on Dec. 30, free and fair elections appear to be nearly impossible unless there is swift and meaningful intervention by the international community. Absent rapid and significant engagement, Bangladesh will continue on its path to an authoritarian future, leaving its citizens without basic freedoms.

As you continue to follow these issues, please see the below updates on the dire circumstances the people of Bangladesh face.

**U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Earl R. Miller called attention to the dangerous and unsafe polling environment, noting that in an election atmosphere characterized by violence, still the "opposition party candidates have borne the brunt of most violence."**

- [Statement by Ambassador Earl Miller on Election Violence in Bangladesh following meeting with Election Commission, U.S. Embassy-Dhaka](#)

**The Bangladesh government rejected U.S.-funded election observers, refusing to grant appropriate credentials and visas.**

- [Statement on Upcoming Election in Bangladesh, U.S. State Department](#)
- [Bangladesh rejects US criticism of elections, The Hill](#)

**Both the United Nations and Human Rights Watch repeated calls on Bangladeshis and international stakeholders to ensure free, fair and safe elections in the face of continuing intimidation and suppression.**

- [Spokesman for the Secretary-General on the elections in Bangladesh, United Nations](#)
- [Bangladesh: Violent Campaign Targets Opposition; Protect Candidates to Ensure a Credible Election, Human Rights Watch](#)
- [Bangladesh election: Voters prepare to go to polls amid 'atmosphere of fear' for opposition activists, The Independent \(UK\)](#)

**Freedom of the press remains in peril, as government crackdowns and attacks on journalists remain common. Facebook recently removed several fake "pro-government, anti-opposition" pages aimed at discrediting opposing politicians, thought leaders and activists.**

- ['I no longer write the way I used to': Journalists fear the Bangladeshi government, Columbia Journalism Review](#)
- [Bangladesh: Masked youth attack journalists before elections, Al Jazeera](#)
- [AP Exclusive: Facebook removes fake Bangladesh news sites, Associated Press/Washington Post](#)

*This material is distributed by Blue Star Strategies on behalf of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.*

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**From:** [Jeremiah Baronberg](#)  
**To:** [Jeremiah Baronberg](#)  
**Subject:** Topline News on Bangladesh / January 22, 2019  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 22, 2019 3:29:06 PM  
**Attachments:** [image004.png](#)

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### **Topline News on Bangladesh / January 22, 2019**

On Dec. 30, 2018, the Bangladeshi people were meant to head to the polls for a participatory, free and fair national election to decide whether they would choose the continuing rule of Sheikh Hasina and the Awami League or change course by electing candidates from opposition parties, including the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

Unfortunately, activists and opponents of the current regime's worst fears were realized—violent attacks on BNP candidates and journalists, a shutdown of internet and communications channels and clear ballot interference—and no entity with the power and ability to do so stepped in to ensure Bangladeshis had access to a free and fair democratic process.

While responses fell short of full condemnations, reactions from foreign governments, international organizations and media—including a recent [New York Times](#) editorial headlined "Bangladesh's Farcical Vote"—recognized publicly the violence, electoral fraud and slide toward authoritarianism in Bangladesh.

Despite these external pressures, the ruling party seemingly has no intention of putting into place safeguards for democratic governance that will impede their dictatorial tendencies. Rather, the Awami League has taken further steps to concentrate its power in the government, refusing to allow any individuals outside of the party to hold cabinet seats or leadership positions of any significance.

As you continue to follow these issues, please see the below updates on the dire circumstances the people of Bangladesh face:

#### **Substantive evidence of voter fraud has been reported, with watchdog group Transparency International finding "irregularities" in 47 of 50 constituencies surveyed.**

- [Transparency International finds 'irregularities' in Bangladesh vote, Reuters](#)
- [Sheikh Hasina denies Bangladesh poll fraud as opposition cries foul, Financial Times](#)
- ['They Threaten Everyone.' Sheikh Hasina's Landslide Win in Bangladesh Marred by Voter Suppression, TIME](#)

#### **The United Nations and Human Rights Watch independently chronicled escalating violence and have called for independent probes into allegations of vote-rigging.**

- [Bangladesh: Election Abuses Need Independent Probe, Human Rights Watch](#)
- [Violent Repression of Opposition, Human Rights Watch](#)
- [UN urges 'restraint' in Bangladesh's post-parliamentary election violence, United Nations](#)
- [Bangladesh elections: Hold those responsible accountable for 'violent attacks and intimidation,' United Nations](#)

**Multiple foreign governmental bodies have also released statements expressing serious concern over unsafe and undemocratic polling environments.**

- Bangladesh Election, US State Department
- Statement by the Spokesperson on parliamentary elections in Bangladesh, EU Parliament
- Minister for Asia statement on Bangladesh elections, Government of the United Kingdom
- Statement on the 11th parliamentary election in Bangladesh, Government of Norway

**Suppression of free speech and freedom of the press continues as critics of the ruling party are sent to prison or flee the country in fear.**

- Bangladeshi journalist arrested and another on run after writing about voting irregularities in election, The Independent (UK)
- Bangladesh man jailed for posting altered photo of PM on Facebook, Al Jazeera

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## Foreign Affairs Committee

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Tel 020 7219 6106 | Email [FAC@parliament.uk](mailto:FAC@parliament.uk)  
Website [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk)

Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP  
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London, SW1A 2AH

18 December 2018

Dear Foreign Secretary,

In advance of the elections to be held in Bangladesh on 30 December, I am writing to ask what reports the FCO has received about the likelihood of those elections being free and fair; and what steps the FCO is taking to make sure that the elections meet internationally-recognised democratic norms.

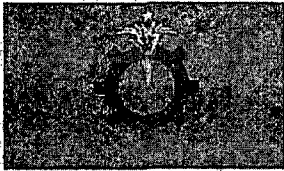
I am concerned about the findings of Human Rights Watch (reported [here](#) and in the attached) which make various serious allegations, including:

- Repeated cases of the arrest and detention of protesters and opposition figures;
- Violence and intimidation by the student and youth wings of the ruling party;
- A failure by the judiciary and election commission to act independently and fairly, for example in disputes about candidate registration; and
- Thousands of apparently politically motivated criminal charges brought against opposition party members and supporters.

I am sure you will share my concern about such allegations and so I would be grateful if you could explain whether the allegations made by Human Rights Watch are recognised by the FCO; what steps the FCO is taking to help ensure that the forthcoming elections in Bangladesh are free and fair; and what recent representations the FCO has made to Sheikh Hasina Wazed's government on these issues.

It is likely that the Committee will decide to publish this letter and your response to it. Thank you in advance for helping the Committee with this matter.

Tom Tugendhat MP  
Chair



## BANGLADESH NATIONALIST PARTY-BNP

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12 November 2018

Honorable Randy Hultgren,  
Co-Chair  
Honorable James P. McGovern,  
Co-Chair  
Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission  
House Committee on Foreign Affairs  
4150 O'Neill Federal Building  
200 C Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
United States of America

Dear Co-Chairs Hultgren and McGovern,

On behalf of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), I am writing to express our appreciation for holding this week's Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission briefing on 'Elections and Human Rights in Bangladesh.' The BNP is in admiration for your leadership in calling attention to these difficult challenges at this timely juncture.


As you know, the Bangladesh Election Commission announced on 7 November that the next general election will be held on 23 December. As the Secretary-General of the leading opposition political party, I can attest to a fraught political climate where criticism, dissent, and holding differing political views have led to the imprisonment, disappearances and even deaths of a number of Bangladeshi citizens. These victims include Khaleda Zia, Chairperson of the BNP and former Prime Minister, who has been imprisoned under politically motivated circumstances in ill health. Just this week, she was forcibly discharged from the hospital and directed to an abandoned prison, where she is facing yet another set of unsubstantiated charges.

As Bangladesh prepares for the national elections, it is critical to be transparent, free, fair and inclusive. The ruling regime must act now to provide for an election process in which all parties can participate without interference and free from fear of reprisal or harm. It is imperative that the people of Bangladesh be afforded a true democratic process so that they are able to participate fully in the campaign and election, as well as to cast their vote. Otherwise, this would undermine the legitimacy of the next government, which, among many other functions, is a partner in any international efforts addressing the Rohingya crisis.

The BNP has officially expressed its decision to participate in the upcoming elections in an attempt to uphold the democratic principles and to challenge the silencing of rights of the people. We are grateful for holding this Congressional briefing, which we hope would draw attention to how electoral tension is negatively impacting human rights and the state of democracy in Bangladesh.

Thank you very much for your time and your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir 12.12.18  
Secretary General  
Bangladesh Nationalist Party